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Dr. August Steiger.

**THOMAS SHADWELL'S "LIBERTINE".**

A Complementary Study to the Don Juan-literature.



Bern.  
Verlag von A. Francke  
(vormals Schmid & Francke).

1904.

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# Thomas Shadwell's

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A Complementary Study to the Don Juan-literature

by

Dr. August Steiger.



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(formerly SCHMID & FRANCKE)

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*Meinem Vater.*

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*Meinem Vater.*





## PREFACE.

In the forging of that long chain of Don Juan-literature England has taken a very small share. The most important English link, Thomas Shadwell's «Libertine»<sup>1)</sup>, is so rarely to be found in continental libraries that the critics on the subject either confess not to know it, or prefer to repeat the usual tradition that Shadwell's «Libertine» is a mere copy of Molière's «Dom Juan».

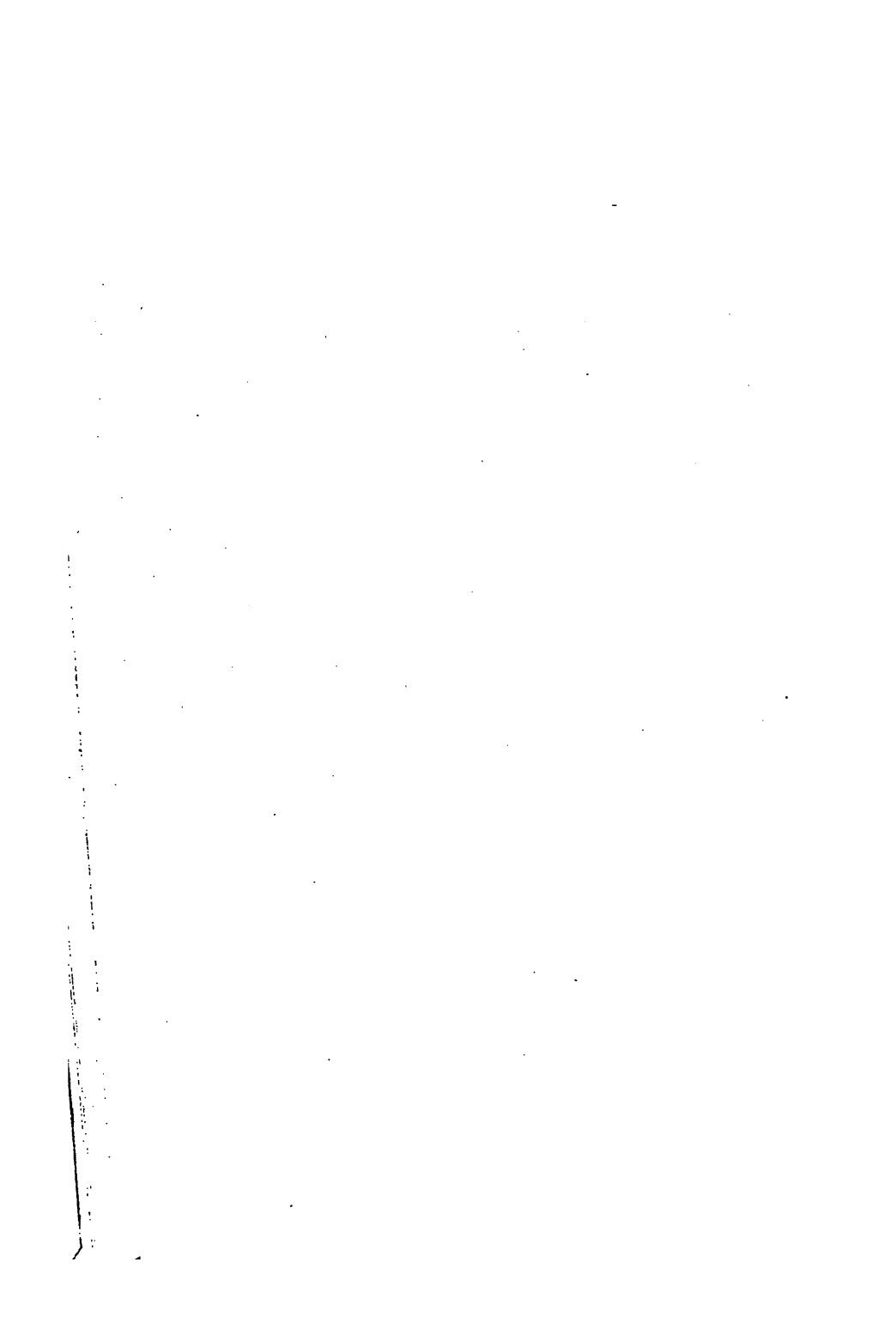
The following pages attempt to mark out the position of England in the Don Juan-literature and to give an idea of Shadwell's work, the drama often quoted in questions on the subject, but never known; as, for the source we shall find the usual Molière-theory, if not entirely wrong, at any rate very inexact, there being no direct connexion between Molière's and Shadwell's works.

— I am deeply indebted to Professor Dr. *Müller-Hess* for the impulse to this treatise, for the rare and valuable copies of Shadwell's dramas placed at my disposal out of his private library, and for the kindness shown to me during my studies at the university of Berne.

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<sup>1)</sup> As for Byron's «Don Juan», see pp. 2 and 8.





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<sup>1)</sup> At Molière's time the spelling was "Dom Juan", not "Don Juan".



I.

## Don Juan in Universal and English Literature.

The hero of Thomas Shadwell's tragedy «The Libertine» is well known in literature under the name of Don Juan, that notorious seducer of girls who, having killed the father of one of his victims and violated his tomb, received punishment for his crimes from the statue of the murdered man. In the original and universal significance of this character we find that complement of human nature to the character of Faust which Goethe calls the one of his souls:

«Zwei Seelen wohnen, ach, in meiner Brust,  
Die eine will sich von der andern trennen;  
Die eine hält in derber Liebestust  
Sich an die Welt mit klammernden Organen;  
Die andre hebt gewaltsam sich vom Dust  
Zu den Gefilden hoher Ahnen.»

Don Juan is not only the most popular type of human profligacy, but represents the sensual, bodily side of human nature, in opposition to the more metaphysical turn of mind of Faust. The presumptive energy of both leads to ruin. Don Juan is a Southern (it has even been said the Catholic) brother to the Northern (or the Protestant) Faust.<sup>1)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup> Farinelli l. c. p. 2.

For the last three centuries Don Juan has been a favourite character of *universal literature*, and for about these fifty years his literary representatives have often formed a subject for criticism. There is scarcely any figure in modern literature which has been treated in so many poetical and artistical forms, by so great a number of poets, of such eminent poets, of poets of so many different nations. Above three-score Don Juan-poems more or less original may be mentioned, besides a long series of precursors such as the Jesuit-play of Ingolstadt (1615) or the old Greek legend of Mitys's statue or a Breton ballad which pretends to describe a similar event that had happened at Rosperden in 1486. There were moreover innumerable translations (f. i. about 30 of Da Ponte's libretto to Mozart's opera); and finally there is that vast number of cases where the original Don Juan, as conceived by the first writers who took possession of this highly poetical subject, found congenial portrayal in other works of fiction, such as in the character of *Lovelace* in Richardson's «*Clarissa*», or where he only lent his name to similar types of human beings, such as Byron's «*Don Juan*».

Don Juan has made his way through the literatures of nearly all the European nations and is connected, though not always by a master-piece, with some of the greatest artists: Tirso (?), Molière, Goldoni, Mozart, Byron. Whether the Don Juan-fable has any distinct historical foundation, such as a certain Don Juan Tenorio of Seville who in the XIV<sup>th</sup> century killed the commander Don Gonzalo d'Ulloa in an attempt to seduce his daughter,<sup>1)</sup> or whether the legend was brought into Spain from the North, the

<sup>1)</sup> So Engel, Klein, Mesnard a. o.



country of the faust-legend,<sup>1)</sup> is not our business to discuss. At any rate the first poet who entirely grasped the subject and put it into a really artistic form, was a Spaniard of the XVII<sup>th</sup> century. We have a drama «El Burlador de Sevilla y Comvidado de piedra», printed for the first time in 1630 and generally attributed to Fray Gabriel Tellez, a remarkable Spanish dramatist known by the name of *Tirso de Molina*, although his authorship, from marks of internal evidence, has been disputed (by Farinelli<sup>2)</sup>). By Spanish actors the play was brought over to Italy, and Allacci's *Drammaturgia* of 1666 mentions two Italian comedies «Il convitato di pietra», one by Onofrio *Giliberti*, the other by *Andrea Cicognini*. But Italian influence soon changed Tirso's drama into a harlequinade, chiefly by developing the comical element in the character of Don Juan's servant Catalinon. In this form Don Juan was introduced into France, and the outlines of such a «*commedia dell' arte*», played by a troop of «*comédiens italiens*» at the Théâtre du Petit-Bourbon, are still extant. It seems to have proved a great success, for already in 1658 a «Festin de Pierre», written by *Dorimond*, was played at Lyons, in 1659 another by *De Villiers* in Paris, and in 1665 even *Molière*, almost forced to it by Italian competition, wrote his «*Dom Juan, ou le Festin de Pierre*». Fournel finds it «remarquable que tous les auteurs qui ont traité ce sujet chez nous ont été des comédiens». It is striking indeed, the subject being so tragic. *Molière* calls his play a comedy, *Rosimond*

<sup>1)</sup> So Farinelli who defies all supporters of an historical Don Juan, but does not mention the most important account of a chronicle of Sevil, quoted by Pehoa (v. Klein).

<sup>2)</sup> l. c. p. 318 note.

his a tragi-comedy, and Shadwell who wrote 14 comedies confesses it to be a tragedy.

Along this distinct line of profane Don Juan-dramas, from Spain through Italy to France, there run some dim traces of a more spiritual conception of the subject. They are particularly interesting for us, as Shadwell in harmony with some mention made in Latour's «*Etudes sur l'Espagne*» of a Spanish auto sacramental: «*El ateista fulminado*», declares he has been told «by a worthy gentleman, that many years ago (when first a play was made upon this story in Italy) he has seen it acted there by the name of «*Atheista fulminato*», in churches, on Sundays, as a part of devotion». <sup>1)</sup>

None of the French dramatists claims any particular ethical or religious value for his work (Molière's «*Dom Juan*» certainly is of highly moral significance), although they accept «*l'athée foudroyé*» as a subtitle, and it strikes us comically when Shadwell, the coarsest of all Don Juan-dramatists, leads from the above-mentioned sacred drama to his own production with the words: «*and some, not of the least judgment [very likely the «worthy gentleman» mentioned before] have thought it rather an useful moral than an encouragement to vice*». <sup>2)</sup>

Through Molière Don Juan became the popular name for a certain type of human character; Molière's «*Festin de Pierre*» forms the centre of a vast field of poetical production. Most of the numerous Don Juans

<sup>1)</sup> Preface to Shadwell's «*Libertine*». Although there is no other trace of an Italian «*rappresentazione sacra*» on this subject, Mesnard is inclined to attribute it to Giliberti as a parallel to his comedy which itself seems to be irrecoverably lost. Fournel (p. 363 note) finds that Tirso's Burl. itself «est presque un auto sacramental».

<sup>2)</sup> Preface to the «*Libertine*».



that exist in European literatures go back, more or less directly, to Molière, even those that at the same time draw from the more original Spanish source, f. i. Da Ponte in his libretto already mentioned, to Mozart's opera, and later Spanish dramatists, as Zamora and Zorilla.<sup>1)</sup> On Molière rely (besides numerous translations) Thomas *Corneille's* versification of 1677, *Rosimond's* «Nouveau Festin de Pierre of 1669,<sup>2)</sup> Goldoni's comedy, several German puppet-shows,<sup>3)</sup> f. i. «Donschang der desparate Ritter» (played in Hannover 1777/78) and harlequinades such as «Das steinerne Toten-Gastmahl oder Die im Grabe noch lebende Rache, oder Die aufs höchste gestiegene, endlich übel angekommene Kühn- und Frechheit» (played in Dresden 1752). It was especially Germany, the home of Dr. Faust, that delighted in various poetical forms of the Don Juan-legend<sup>4)</sup>: we have a ballade «Don Juan» in «Des Knaben Wunderhorn», and even Schiller left a fragment of one; we have a «Reutlinger Volksbuch: «Wahrhaftige Geschichte vom ärgerlichen Leben des spanischen Ritters Don Juan und wie ihn zuletzt der ††† Teufel geholt». Another one even gives «the Songs Don Juan used to sing». Moreover, Don Juan has been made the hero of novels (P. Mérimée), and ballets have been arranged upon the subject (Bondet, Gluck).

But at any time and place it was on the stage that Don Juan, by his highly *dramatic character*, cele-

<sup>1)</sup> But Magnin (*Revue des deux mondes* 1847) goes too far in saying: «Sauf la statue tout dans le Don Juan français appartient à Molière». Laun (Molière, ed. Laun VII, Einleitung), on the other hand, is partial to the Germans, claiming originality for them exclusively.

<sup>2)</sup> With loans raised in Dorimond and De Villiers.

<sup>3)</sup> Engel l. c.

<sup>4)</sup> Most of the examples given are taken from Engel.

brated his greatest triumphs. And on the stage it was above all other forms the opera wherein Don Juan, by his highly *musical character*, found his deepest interpretation and his highest artistic perfection. We have numerous Don Juan-dramas of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, by P. Heyse, Lenau, Puschkin, Al. Tolstoy, Zorilla and others; it is true, some of them are rather extravagant and arbitrary extensions of the original subject, f. i. Trautmann's «Don Juan in Wiesbaden» or Hahn's «Don Juan aus Familienrücksichten». Nicolaus Vogt and Grabbe have welded together Don Juan and Faust in one drama; we know of about ten different Don-Juan-operas, but in the expression of this sensual side of human nature, human art reached its climax in *Mozart's opera* «Il dissoluto punito ossia il Don Giovanni», 1787, this «opera of operas» (Engel), composed on *Da Ponte's libretto*,<sup>1)</sup> the only work worthy to stand side by side with Goethe's «Faust», the work by which Mozart gained the name of the «musical Shakespeare».<sup>2)</sup>

In this great mass of Don Juan-poetry *English literature* takes a very poor place. Before and after *Shadwell's* «*Libertine*» there is scarcely anything to be mentioned, and even Shadwell is scarcely worth mentioning in comparison with Tirso, Molière, and Mozart. The first performance of his tragedy took place in 1676 «by his Majesty's Servants», it was printed separately in 1676, 1697, 1704, 1705, and in the complete edition of Shadwell's dramas 1720.<sup>3)</sup> The second part of the Don Juan-legend (the ghostly

<sup>1)</sup> Fastenrath (referring to Farinelli l. c. p. 92) attributes the dramatical value of the text more to Bertati (p. IV).

<sup>2)</sup> Bolte l. c.

<sup>3)</sup> Beljame, Bibliographie.



supper) is contained in Sir Aston Cokayne's «Tragedy of Ovid» of 1662, evidently based on a performance, seen once or twice at Venice, of the «Convitato». <sup>1)</sup> Shadwell's play seems to have met with a favourable reception, for the author confesses in his preface that he has «no reason to complain of the success». Wycherley in the «Plain Dealer» alludes to it in Novel's words: «tis like eating with the ghost in the Libertine». <sup>2)</sup> Towards the end of the century Henry Purcell inserted several musical passages into Shadwell's drama, composing melodies f. i. for the dance of the shepherds and nymphs and for their chorus «In these delightful fragrant groves». But it is remarkable that no trace whatever is to be found of a Don Juan played by those wandering English comedians who for the rest knew so well how to profit by Spanish and Italian sources for their plays. — In 1787 and 1790 a pantomime was played at the Royalty Theatre «Don Juan or the Libertine destroyed, a Tragic Pantomimical Entertainment in two acts», based upon Shadwell's tragedy. Ticknor <sup>3)</sup> considers the latter to be the foundation of «the short play which has often been acted on the American stage». In 1770 appeared Ozell's translation from Molière, and about 1820 Moncrieff (William Thomas) published a most eccentric musical play «Don Juan in London, or the Libertine Reclaimed». <sup>4)</sup> Mozart's opera was performed for the first time in England 1817, at the Haymarket Theatre, with the Italian text, then at Covent Garden after an English libretto: «The Libertine» by a certain

<sup>1)</sup> Dräger l. c. p. 22.

<sup>2)</sup> Farinelli G. St. p. 60.

<sup>3)</sup> Span. lit. p. 310 note.

<sup>4)</sup> Farinelli G. St. p. 285.



Pocock<sup>1)</sup> (the title may be an echo of Shadwell's tragedy or a translation of Mozart's «Dissoluto»). As we have already mentioned, Byron's «Don Juan» has nothing in common with our traditional hero but his name and his character in general.

Of these comparatively few traces Don Juan has left in England, Shadwell's tragedy is certainly the most important, and even if the play has no literary merit at all (as Ticknor declares,<sup>2)</sup> yet it is decidedly of a certain literary interest.

There may be several reasons, why England did so little in the representation of a character so exceedingly favourable to poetical, especially to dramatic expression. Shakespeare had died half a century too early, the sources had hardly been accessible to him, and when at last the story of the grand seducer reached England, her dramatic power was exhausted, and none of the numerous minor talents but Shadwell attempted to portray the hero who in other countries had fascinated so many and such great poets. — Farinelli<sup>3)</sup> finds another reason: «If Don Juan had been born in England, he would have had to leave his country at once to exact his features of seduction and frivolity. It is true, England had her libertines as well as any other country and at any time, and British egoism corresponds closely with Don Juan's egoism, but she never accepted immorality as a principle, she always was, and still is, to other nations a model of moral firmness and severity». — Farinelli may partly be right, but there was a time (a short one, it is true) when even England, or at least her

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<sup>1)</sup> Farinelli G. St. p. 286.

<sup>2)</sup> Ticknor Sp. Lit. p. 310 note.

<sup>3)</sup> G. St. p. 57.

upper classes, with the court at the head of all, seemed to accept immorality as a principle, when indecency in art went so far «as to associate systematically vice with those things which men value most, and virtue with everything ridiculous and degrading».<sup>1)</sup> And it was during this time, under the later Stuarts, that the English Don Juan was written: Shadwell's «Libertine», very likely the grossest, the bloodiest of all Don Juan-dramas that ever existed, with «some thirty murders, rapes innumerable, frequent sacrilege and parricide»<sup>2)</sup> in the antecedents, and with half a dozen fights, and about ten homicides represented on the stage, besides having more than a dozen women seduced or ravished in the course of the play. Baker's «Biographia dramatice» of 1782 calls it so abominable «as to render it little less than impiety to represent it on the stage».<sup>3)</sup>

As we observed English literature shows comparatively few Don Juans on its pages, and England has ever distinguished herself, if not always by real morality, yet by the outward show of it, by prudery. Now it is a strange coincidence that this same country contributed to the Don Juan-literature just the extreme expression of the idea in a certain direction, if we may speak of a poetical «idea» at all in this case. But within the limits of the poetry of its time, of the late Stuart drama, Shadwell's «Libertine» offers nothing particularly extravagant. On the contrary, it may be called one of the best specimens of its kind, being full of life (— and deaths!) and action, with a rapid change of scenes of fights, murders, rapes, revels,

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<sup>1)</sup> Macaulay, Comic Dramatists.

<sup>2)</sup> The Libertine p. 97 (Jacomio).

<sup>3)</sup> Jahn l. c. IV. p. 343.



songs, and dances, and with a brilliant display of thunderstorms, fires, and ghostly apparitions, all «flavoured» by a lot of ought-to-be-witty indecencies or by numerous signs of brutal sensuality without any pretension to wit. It is one of those many pieces translated from the French, but translated not only into English words, but also — the boast of a good translation! — into the English spirit of that time, that is: put into the coarse language of the new «milieu» and in every way adapted to the taste of the English public, or at least of that part which used to go to the theatre, the upper classes. It is by this process of what we might call «grossification», that chiefly Molière, decent and moral as he is, was made suitable for the English stage by the «adaptations» of Dryden, Congreve, Wycherley, Shadwell and others. With what conceit these plagiarists used to consider their work we may conclude from Shadwell's preface to his «Miser»: «I may say without vanity, that Molière's part of it [viz. of the play] has not suffered in my hands; nor did I ever know a French comedy made use of by the worst of our poets, that was not bettered by 'em». <sup>1)</sup>

It may be that the immorality of the court of Charles II. and of his theatre relied on the want of moral refinement which «le joyeux monarque» had found in France, but Wülker <sup>2)</sup> decidedly and justly repels Thackeray's accusation that the indecency of the then English drama was caused by the indecency of its French models. In the Libertine we find an

<sup>1)</sup> To this Humbert makes the following remark (p. 114): «Shadwell ist ein Dieb, der den Beraubten tot schlägt. Und weshalb beraubte er denn gerade den Franzosen Molière? Weil er ihn für einen reichen Mann hielt».

<sup>2)</sup> L. c. p. 362.

allusion, though very likely made unconsciously, to the cause of this extreme immorality: Don John and his friends Don Antonio and Don Lopez meet an old hermit (III, 2. p. 130):

*Don Antonio:* What old fool is that?

*Don Lopez:* It is a hermit, a fellow of mighty beard and sanctity.

It is this «mighty sanctity», this overdone decency of the Puritan Commonwealth which caused that overdone indecency of the Restoration to counter-balance.<sup>1)</sup>

But our «Libertine» is also the example of another feature of Shadwell's which has often been overlooked or under-valued by literary historians, f. i. by Wülker.<sup>2)</sup> In spite of all his gross indecencies, Shadwell claims, and I believe earnestly, to follow a *moral purpose*.<sup>3)</sup> He does so not only in the preface to his *Libertine*, which piece he thinks «rather an useful moral than an encouragement to vice», and not only in the last words of his tragedy, when the statue, after Don John's destruction, pronounces «the moral»<sup>4)</sup>:

Thus perish all  
Those men, who by their words and actions dare  
Against the will and pow'r of heav'n declare.

] *Libertine*  
*of Shadwell*

But also most of his plots show a moral tendency, and there is no better proof for it than the sense in which he represents marriage and adultery: Don John is destroyed for his outrages. His other heroes, after a youth spent in sensual extravagance, «drinking,

<sup>1)</sup> Macaulay, Beljame.

<sup>2)</sup> Lit. Gesch. p. 363.

<sup>3)</sup> This would be the same method of moral influence as in Boccaccio's «Decamerone».

<sup>4)</sup> Lib. p. 178.



whoring, swearing, beating constables», generally find a girl, virtuous, if not out of genuine morality, yet out of disgust of the immorality of others, and for her sake they change their lives and become good husbands. And if Shadwell represents a cuckold, it generally is a man that deserves no better. He has no high idea of conjugal happiness, but connubial purity is the object he aims at when he has any occasion, which he certainly has not in the case of a character like Don Juan. And if in spite of his morality he even excelled in indecency, it would be for two reasons: he represents life as it is, and — he writes for bread. He has not the courage of Jeremy Collier who braved the public opinion of the nobility and of literary circles in his «Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage» (1698). If Shadwell had lived so long, he might have produced some stronger evidence of his moral intentions than Congreve who had no better argument to prove his literary morality than his care «to inculcate a moral packed close into two or three lines, at the end of every play», a moral in most cases which Collier showed to be of very doubtful value.<sup>1)</sup> In the preface to the «Sullen Lovers» Shadwell ridicules the stage of his times: «In the plays, which have been written of late, there is no such thing as perfect character, but the two chief persons are most commonly a swearing, drinking, whoring ruffian for a lover and an impudent ill-bred tomrig for a mistress». Beljame<sup>2)</sup> is right in saying: «Shadwell et Otway ont fait de la comédie de leur temps une vive et juste critique qu'aucunes ne méritent plus que les leurs. Tous at-

<sup>1)</sup> Macaulay, Com. Dram.

<sup>2)</sup> Beljame, l. c. p. 139.

taquèrent le goût du jour et tous écrivirent pour le flatter». Shadwell wrote to earn his living, he had to win and to keep the good-will of mighty patrons, he wanted to become Poet Laureate; so whilst pursuing moral aims he pandered to English taste by gross indecencies of which the «Libertine» yields some remarkable, though by no means the strongest examples. If this moral side of Shadwell has not been considered more seriously by some literary historians, and if Shadwell is named along with Congreve, Wycherley, Otway, Lee, Settle, Mrs. Behn and others who may be partly better poets, but with whom morality is always represented as a ridiculous fancy, it is owing to the general neglect into which Shadwell has fallen after «his fame was for ever stifled by Dryden's satire. Shadwell enjoyed a fair reputation in his day, and deserved it». <sup>1)</sup> Also Ward gives him credit for morality in purpose.

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<sup>1)</sup> The Retrospective Review 1823. So far as quoted the author of the article may be right, but he is unjust when beginning in this way: «It is so rare for people to form their own opinions or to examine into the validity of prevailing notions». The works of Shadwell being so rare, this period of English literature so disgusting, and this particular point of such moderate importance, he is certainly not entitled to pronounce so general a condemnation on the ground of a single article on a subject he has been fortunate enough to fall upon we know not how.



## II.

### Subject and Sources of the Play.

Before touching the question of Shadwell's sources we give a short *account* of his play. The author having, as usual, made no division into a number of scenes, we divide the acts according to their natural composition.

ACT I. (Sc. 1). The first scene introduces us into the «milieu» and shows *Don John* at home, expounding his «philosophy of pleasure», seconded and admired by *Don Antonio* and *Don Lopez*, his friends and his pupils in the art of enjoyment. His servant *Jacomo* ventures to make reproaches, numbering up their crimes and outrages, two of which are of particular interest: *Don John* has caused his father to be killed for his money, and has himself, in an attempt on the sister of *Don Pedro*, Governor of Seville, killed the latter. Night coming on, the three friends go out in search of new adventures. (Sc. 2.) *Leonora*, one of *Don John's* victims, fearing to be forsaken by him, comes to enquire after the reason of his long absence. *Jacomo* reveals to her his master's character, his passions and his favourite «stratagem» used to satisfy them: to promise marriage and to forsake his victims after



enjoyment. Leonora sees the desperate condition she is in, but cannot believe her seducer to be untrue. Giacomo in order to convince the unfortunate girl and to win her for himself, offers to hide her in an adjacent room, where next morning, she may overhear Don John. He (Sc. 3) and his friends meanwhile have followed their wicked inclinations. They meet before the house of a girl called *Maria*, beloved by Octavio, an acquaintance of Don John's. Our hero resolves to win her; deceived by his serenade she takes him for Octavio, opens her window and drops a letter inviting him to enter upon a certain signal by the backdoor. Don John hides himself near by and overhears Octavio who comes to serenade under Maria's window and gives a signal with his whistle. Don John realizing the value of this little instrument, rushes upon him, they fight, Octavio is killed, Don John with his rival's whistle, hat and cloak is taken for Octavio, admitted by the backdoor, and led into Maria's bedroom, (Sc. 4) where after some time, by the light brought in, Maria discovers the serious mistake. She rouses the house by her cries; her brother hastens to the rescue, but Don John easily kills him, beats the servants off, and escapes.

ACT II. (Sc. 1.) Next morning Don John tells Giacomo of his latest adventures; Leonora listening in the other room is shocked by his account and (Sc. 2) comes forth: a scene of selfish excuses and mutual reproaches follows. (Sc. 3.) At last she is convinced of his wickedness by the entrance of «*six women*, all wives to Don John» (as they are somewhat summarily designated in the enumeration of the *dramatis personae*). Everyone of them claims Don John for her husband; he manages to keep them aloof for some



time, but at last he confesses that he is married to them all. In his cynicism he even goes so far as to dispose of his wives most liberally to his gay friends who arrive just in time; for his own use he sends a servant into the street with the order: «Force in the next woman you meet». (Sc. 4.) Meanwhile Maria, full of grief for her brother's and her lover's deaths with her faithful maid Flora has followed him. Both are disguised as men, and with a band of bravos they hope to avenge the double murder. But in the ensuing fight her bravos fly, Flora is killed, and Maria disarmed by Don John. Our gallants, feeling Seville is growing too hot a place for them, provide for flight, and it is quite in vain that the ghost of Don John's father appears to convert his vicious son.

ACT III. (Sc. I.) A terrible thunderstorm surprises them at sea, a flash of lightning sets the ship on fire; they profit by the general confusion on board and escape in the life-boat. (Sc. 2.) On the coast they first meet with an old *hermit* whom they shock by their impious discourse; then they are kindly received by *Don Francisco*, a hospitable country-gentleman whose two daughters are to be married next morning, as he informs his guests. (Sc. 3.) But also Maria and Leonora who had both followed their seducer on another ship, the former for revenge, the latter for love (as we learn from the explanatory bill), have escaped the storm, and Jacomo also is rescued before our eyes. Leonora becoming aware of Maria's bloody intentions resolves to warn her faithless lover of his pursuer. But Don John is already on another scent; being particularly hot upon maidenheads he makes up his mind to win the two brides (Sc. 4) *Clara and Flavia*, who on solitary walk bewail their sorry fate in being

compelled to marry each an unknown and unbeloved man. After an interesting discussion about the different social positions of women in Spain and England they part, (Sc. 5) Clara lights on Don John, listens to his flattering words and agrees to a nightly meeting. Flavia whom he meets soon after is not so easily won, but as we hear later on she yields too. (Sc. 6.) Maria and Leonora, in search of Don Francisco's house are accosted by Don Antonio and Don Lopez who soon agree to rob the «young man» Maria and to ravish Leonora. Being saved by the intervention of some country-people she hastens to find Don John in order to warn him of Maria's revenge. But he, wishing to get rid of her loving importunity, poisons her, but she dies only after having given him warning in her last words. Even Don John is touched by so much love.

ACT IV. (Sc. 1.) On the wedding-morning Maria, still in her disguise, comes to caution Don Francisco against his dangerous guests. He, to avoid any quarrel in his house, wishes to send them all away, but Clara and Flavia intervene, each of them claiming Don John for her husband. Another fight ensues, Maria and Don Francisco are killed, Don John and his friends, though victorious, find it better to fly. (Sc. 2.) They reach a country-house and in a delightful grove near by they observe some *shepherds and nymphs* who join in song, and dance, and rural happiness. Our gallants, unable to look idly at these innocent sports interrupt the feast each catching a woman and running away with her. (Sc. 3.) On their way home they pass by a church, they enter and find the *statue of Don Pedro* with an inscription calling for revenge. Don John forces his servant to invite the



statue to supper; to their utter astonishment the stone-monument accepts the invitation, which has been repeated by Don John personally, by a consenting nod of the head. (Sc. 4.) While they are enjoying their *supper*, Don Pedro's ghost appears, as has been promised and is kindly invited to take part, but declines. His warnings, though accompanied by a chorus of devils, are of no effect at all, Don John in his cynicism going so far as to propose a toast to the healths of Don Pedro's mistress and sister. He courteously accepts the statue's invitation to a midnight-repast at his tomb.

ACT. V. (Sc. 1.) Don Lopez, having found an old sweetheart of his in a nunnery of the neighbourhood, our heroes hold counsel how to win some of the pious maids, and they fall upon the following «stratagem» (as Don John calls it). (Sc. 2.) They go to set the *nunnery* on fire and pretend to rescue some of its inmates (amongst whom they find Clara and Flavia as probationers) in order to ravish them. But they are prevented by the guards and shepherds in pursuit of the sinners. Another fight follows, the guards, as usual, are defeated, their officer and two shepherds killed. (Sc. 3.) At midnight Don John, his friends and servant enter the church to return the ghost's visit. They are welcomed in splendid state by the ghosts of all of Don John's victims; but they are disgusted with the bad treatment they receive and request wine, they are offered blood; they ask for music, and a chorus of devils gives a vivid picture of the pains of hell. A last chance for repentance is afforded, they refuse. Don Antonio and Don Lopez are swallowed up by the ground, but even the fate of his friends will not terrify Don John in the least. In grand *defiance*

of all the powers of heaven and hell he addresses Don Pedro's statue:

«Here stand I firm, and all thy threats condemn.

Thy murderer stands here, now do thy worst.»

«It thunders and lightens. Devils descend and sink with Don John, who is covered with a cloud of fire as he sinks».¹) Jacomo had left the uncomfortable place shortly before to — speak the epilogue.

The literary merit of Shadwell's «Libertine» diminishes considerably, if we enter upon the question of its *sources*, and our esteem sinks lower still on reading in his presumptuous preface: «The character of the libertine, and consequently those of his friends, are borrowed, but all the plot, till the latter end of the fourth act, is new, and all the rest is very much varied from anything which has been done upon the subject». He probably would have done better simply to copy one of the «four French plays made upon the story»²); at any rate he is not entitled to claim so much originality for his play; this we are going to prove.

The model we should think the nearest for Shadwell's Don John is, of course, Molière's Dom Juan. It would not have been for the first time, nor for the last, that he imitated the prince of French comedians and his own famous contemporary, at the same time assuming the pride and self-satisfaction of an original writer or at least of an author by far superior to his models. He had done so in his «Sullen Lovers» (1668) and in the «Miser» (1671), he did so later on in «Bury fair» (1689). In fact his «Libertine» is generally numbered amongst the imitations of and plagiarisms from Molière. Mesnard³) confesses: «On

¹) Lib. p. 178.

²) Preface to Lib. p. 87.

³) Mol. V, p. 64.



a d'abord envie d'y supposer une des imitations les plus incontestables du Dom Juan de Molière ». Castil-Blaze<sup>1)</sup> mentions « The Libertine destroyed, Comédie imitée de Don Juan par Shadwel ». Ward takes the acquaintance with Molière's « Festin » for granted and admits that Shadwell's work « appears to contain some details not in Molière ». Farinelli<sup>2)</sup> regrets not to have been able to read it himself<sup>3)</sup>, he refers to Ward and Mesnard from whose opinions he comes to the conclusion that Shadwell « seems to have followed, besides Molière, also Rosimond ». On this occasion he administers a hard blow to Mahrenholtz who passed a condemnatory sentence on Shadwell's « wertlose Compilation » without having read it himself. Engel more sincerely confesses not to have had access to Shadwell's work and refers firstly to Jahn who declines any positive statement as to the « Spanish or Italian or French source » and for its literary value refers to Baker<sup>4)</sup>, and secondly to Mahrenholtz who himself refers to Mesnard, holding Shadwell's « Libertine » not worthy of comparison with Molière's « Dom Juan ». Humbert quotes Shadwell's preface to the « Miser » from Voltaire's « Sommaire » to Molière's « Avare ». Ticknor<sup>5)</sup> mentions Shadwell in connection with Tirso and for intermediate links refers to Parfaict. Gaspary<sup>6)</sup> quotes Shadwell's preface from Mesnard<sup>7)</sup> who comes not very short of what we take

<sup>1)</sup> Mol. mus. p. 244.

<sup>2)</sup> G. Stor. p. 59.

<sup>3)</sup> The article of the Retrospective Review alluded to by Farinelli contains nothing about the « Libertine ».

<sup>4)</sup> Biogr. dram. V, p. 9 of this paper.

<sup>5)</sup> l. c. II, p. 310.

<sup>6)</sup> l. c., p. 58.

<sup>7)</sup> Grands Ecrivains, Molière V, p. 64.

to be the truth: « Qu'on lise sa tragédie du Libertin, on ne l'accusera pas d'avoir trop fidèlement traduit Dom Juan . . . . Il a pris aux Espagnols, aux Italiens, à Dorimond, à Villiers, à Rosimond, qu'il nomme tous (?), autant, si non plus, qu'à Molière ». Dräger<sup>1)</sup> says the same: « Er hat aus allen etwas entnommen ». In this statement he seems to rely on Mesnard, certainly not on Shadwell himself, for he cannot have read the preface to the « Libertine » although he speaks of it with an air of absolute authority: « Weniger bedeutend (als Cokayne) ist Shadwell's « Libertine », 1676 aufgeführt. Wichtig ist für uns nur die Vorrede, in der er alle Don Juan-Stücke aufzählt, die vier französischen, ein spanisches und *ein* italienisches ». For Shadwell himself, at last, informs us about kindred dramas in a somewhat general way in the beginning of his preface:

« The story, from which I took the hint of this play, is famous all over Spain, Italy and France: It was first put into a Spanish play (as I have been told) the Spaniards having a tradition (which they believe) of such a vicious Spaniard as is represented in this play. From them the Italian comedians took it; and from them the French took it; and four several French plays were made upon the subject » (viz. Dorimond's, De Villier's, Molière's and Rosimond's).

The *usual indistinct and second-hand way of making statements*, in regard to this question, due in most cases to the rareness of Shadwell's works in continental libraries, justifies a close investigation into the subject.<sup>2)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup> l. c., p. 22, 23.

<sup>2)</sup> By some mistake or other the tragedy is often quoted as « The Libertine destroyed ».



Is it Molière? — Is it Molière alone or in company with others? Is it Molière at all? We say: No!

Now for the proofs! — In the first place *external evidence* speaks strongly against Molière. His «Festin de Pierre» appeared on the stage of the Palais Royal on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February 1665. It was played 15 times only, and met with such lively opposition from the nobility and clergy, that after the performance of the 20<sup>th</sup> of March of the same year it was not again played in France till 1847; Th. Corneille's versification, being less offensive, had taken its place. The first print of Molière's «Dom Juan» appeared in 1682 at Amsterdam, six years after the English tragedy; for in the collection of his works edited at Amsterdam in 1675 the publishers had inserted Dorimond's «Festin de Pierre», Molière's authentic play being suppressed and forgotten. The only way to explain a direct influence of Molière upon Shadwell would be to take for granted that Shadwell happened to be at Paris just within those five weeks when Molière's piece was played. In fact there is no reason to declare this an impossibility; of Shadwell's biography we know that after some studies at the Inner Temple he travelled on the continent; and we easily may suppose him to have been in Paris at the age of 25 years. So it is possible that he saw Dom Juan acted at the Palais Royal, but it is not very probable. And he is far less likely to have seen it performed upon that piratical text of which there are some faint traces in a play which seems to have been performed in some southern province about 1669.<sup>1)</sup>

But Shadwell might have got his plot from Mo-

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<sup>1)</sup> Molière V, p. 47.

lière in a second-hand-way, perhaps by the same authority that informed him of the history of Don Juan in Spanish, Italian and French literatures. But then we wonder why he has not followed his model more closely, why he resembles more the predecessors and, above all, a certain successor of Molière's than Poquelin himself. — There are few or no plots and episodes common to Shadwell and Molière, which *internal evidence* could not identify in some other Don Juan-dramas previous to Shadwell. On the other hand, there are certain remarkable and most impressive scenes in Molière, but only in Molière (f. i. M. Dimanche, Don Juan's hypocrisy). And then there are features occurring in Shadwell's which we find not in Molière's but in other Don Juan dramas. So we come to the conclusion that Shadwell must have drawn from a source in which the springs of earlier French and perhaps even Italian plays were united; and this source was afforded to him in Rosimond.

*Claude La Rose, sieur de Rosimond*, was one of the best actors of the troupe of the «Théâtre du Marais» and Molière's successor in this capacity at the Palais-Royal. As a curious item of congeniality we note that De Tralage (quoted by the brothers Parfaict) says of him<sup>1</sup>): «A force de boire il était devenu excessivement gros», and that he is reputed to have died (on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1686) in a «cabaret»; this reminds us of Shadwell's death which was said to have been caused by an over-dose of opium. In Rosimond the mentioned parallelism of sacred and profane Don Juan-poems is so far kept up as he wrote a religious work «Les vies des saints pour tous les jours de l'année», under the nom de

<sup>1</sup>) Fournel l. c. pp. 315, 316.



plume of Jean-Baptiste du Mesnil ». Of the seven pieces attributed to him (besides five dubious ones) the second is « *Le nouveau festin de Pierre ou l'athée foudroyé, Tragi-comédie en cinq actes* ». It was performed in November 1669 on the Théâtre du Marais and printed in 1670 in three 12<sup>o</sup> editions (by P. Bienfait, G. Guignard and F. Clouzier in Paris). His « *avis au lecteur* » is remarkable for modesty and sincerity, and thereby it forms a strange contrast to Shadwell's preface although containing nearly the same piece of information about Don Juan:

« Lecteur, ce n'est pas d'aujourd'hui qu'on t'a présenté ce sujet. Les comédiens italiens l'ont apporté en France, et il a fait tant de bruit chez eux que toutes les troupes en ont voulu régaler le public. M. de Villiers l'a traité pour l'Hôtel de Bourgogne, et M. de Molière l'a fait voir depuis peu avec des beautés toutes particulières. Après une touche si considérable, tu t'étonneras que je me sois exposé à y mettre la main, mais apprends que je me connais trop pour m'être flatté d'en faire quelque chose d'excellent, et que la troupe dont j'ai l'honneur d'être, étant la seule qui ne l'a point représenté à Paris, j'ai cru qu'y joignant ces superbes ornements de théâtre qu'on voit d'ordinaire chez nous, elle pourrait profiter du bonheur qu'un sujet si fameux a toujours eu. . . . Fais-moi la grâce de ne pas confondre ce *Festin de Pierre* avec un que tu as pu voir sous le nom de M. Dorimond; nos deux noms ont assez de rapport pour t'empêcher de lire celui-ci, croyant que c'est le même; et quoique le sien soit infiniment meilleur, ne me refuse pas un quart d'heure de ton temps. Adieu. »

Already this preface explains to us how Shadwell obtained his knowledge of some former plays made

upon the story. And the Frenchman's excuse for the irregularities of his piece (« Tu t'étonneras des fautes qui sont en cet ouvrage; mais excuse une première pièce et sache qu'il est impossible de mettre celle-ci dans les règles ») shows a most suspicious resemblance to Shadwell's words in the preface (like Rosimond's just after some remarks upon French Don Juan-dramas): « I hope the readers will excuse the irregularities of the play when they consider that the extravagance of the subject forced me to it ».

In the play itself it was first of all the fact that our English Don John has two fellow-libertines (Don Antonio and Don Lopez) which struck critical minds. It is true, already five years before, in the « Miser » (certainly, and even avowedly copied from Molière's « Avare ») Shadwell had furnished his young hero with two friends (Rant and Hazard, « bullies and sharpers of the town »), Molière's piece « having too few persons and too little action for an English theatre » (preface to the « Miser »). So we might explain (and excuse!) the existence of the two gentlemen in the « Libertine » by the author's need of more persons and action, he being unable to impersonate a character such as Don Juan in a single man, without giving a broad view of his milieu. But our suspicions arise on hearing that also Rosimond has the two friends, and they are confirmed by the fact that one of them bears the name of Don Lope. — Another piece of evidence already afforded by the « dramatis personae » is the name of Leonora for one of Don Juan's victims, occurring both in Rosimond and in Shadwell, but only in these two authors. — Perhaps even the name of the murdered governor of Seville yields a reason in favour of our theory: In the course of literary tra-



dition its original type Gonzalo de Ulloa had lost his name. Speaking of the title «Festin de Pierre» Gaspar<sup>1)</sup> says: «Es müsste ein neues Missverständnis in den ersten französischen Stücken dem Comthur gerade diesen Namen (Pierre) verschafft haben». But according to Fournel<sup>2)</sup> this name occurs only in Rosimond (Molière simply calls him «le Commandeur») who tried to correct the erroneous translation: convitato=festin, by taking the appellativum «pierre» for the noun proper «Pierre», and from him Shadwell would have taken the name of Don Pedro.

A short account of Rosimond's play will show the principal features it has in common with the bulk of Don Juan-dramas, and the special congruities with the «Libertine».

ACT I. (Sc. 1.) Leonora comes to enquire after her lover Don Juan, but in his absence his servant Carrille reveals to her his master's character as that of a professional seducer and declared atheist. She will not believe it, (Sc. 2) but is soon convinced when, hiding herself in an adjacent room, she overhears Don Juan talking to Carrille of his various crimes (the murder of his own father, of Don Pierre, and, the latest, of Don Bernard who ran to the rescue of his beloved Oriane when Don Juan had ravished her). He justifies his course of life by his natural inclinations. (Sc. 3.) Leonora can hold no longer, she rushes forth, reminds him of his oaths of love and, being rebuked in a most cynical way, bids heaven to avenge her. (Sc. 4.) Carrille ventures to reproach his master and his (Don Juan's) friends Don Felix and Don Lope who have just

<sup>1)</sup> l. c. p. 57.

<sup>2)</sup> l. c. p. 355.

come to keep him company. While Carrille is getting everything ready for his master's flight from Seville, the three worthies speak of their different methods in the pursuit of love; they force the servant to join them in their escape in spite of his various excuses.

ACT II. (Sc. 1.) On their flight our heroes have been surprised by a storm and shipwrecked. We see Carrille saved and informed by Paquette, an inn-keeper's daughter, that already three gentlemen who had escaped the sea-storm, are staying at her father's house. (Sc. 2.) Father Ormin warns his two daughters Paquette and Thomasse against his new guests and tells his guests that each of his daughters is to marry a young man that he has destined for her, in spite of the girls' remonstrances. (Sc. 3.) Don Juan who has already taken a fancy to Paquette, meets Thomasse, wins her by his flatteries, his promise of marriage, and oaths of love.<sup>1)</sup> (Sc. 4.) Paquette joining the group the two girls turn jealous of each other, Don Juan keeps them aloof assuring each that she is his beloved one and cleverly evading any open declaration. (Sc. 5.) While he leaves them for a moment Carrille warns the girls against his master, but in vain. (Sc. 6.) Meanwhile Don Félix has found an old sweetheart of his captive in a temple and asks Don Juan for his counsel and assistance in winning her. (Sc. 7.) According to his advice the temple is set on fire and (Sc. 8) Don Félix rescues his dear Dorinde. (Sc. 9.) Carrille who has tried to profit by the general confusion in order to fly, meets his master again and is forced to follow him.

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<sup>1)</sup> Fournel's note (p. 338): « dans Tirso de Molina Don Juan séduit aussi la fille du pêcheur qui l'a arraché à la mort . . . » is erroneous.



ACT III. (Sc. 1.) Don Juan and his man, the latter ridiculed for his pretended valour (Sc. 2) are interrupted by Paquette and Thomasse each claiming Don Juan as her husband. He quiets them by promising a sum of money which offer they accept in spite of Carrille's ironical remarks (Sc. 3) for which Don Juan offers to punish him. (Sc. 4.) Unfavourable news of the libertine going abroad, his friends find it advisable to shift again and to accept the proposal of Don Gaspard, a pious relation of Don Juan's, who offers them shelter and tries to convince our atheist of the existence of gods, (Sc. 5) but Don Juan declines every spiritual or practical assistance and (Sc. 6) repels «Prévost and Archers» who come in search of him. (Sc. 7.) While Don Juan reproaches his valet for his cowardice they pass a tomb from the inscription of which they gain the pleasant intelligence that on the same spot the murdered body of Don Pierre is waiting to be avenged. The statue is invited to supper, first on Don Juan's order by Carrille, then by the gentleman himself, and it nods acceptance.

ACT IV. (Sc. 1.) While Carrille is preparing supper, Don Juan tells his friends the strange tale of the statue's answer (Sc. 2) and talks with them again on love-pursuits in general. (Sc. 3.) During supper the servant amuses his superiors by his greediness. But to his utter amazement and fright Don Pierre's ghost appears and, (Sc. 4) though kindly invited to take part in the repast, declines the offer and calls the three sinners to repentance. But their natural philosophy is proof against his warnings. Don Félix and Don Lope being threatened even draw their swords, but are suddenly swallowed up by the ground. Yet even the fate of his friends cannot shake the

courage of Don Juan and he accepts the ghost's invitation to a supper at his tomb, in spite of Carrille who in his fear and with his many excuses from taking further part in the repast, forms a comical contrast to his master.

ACT V. (Sc. 1.) Don Juan has interrupted a rural wedding-feast by running away with the bride Amarille. Her father Thomas and her cowardly bridegroom Rollin (Sc. 2) catch Carrille instead of his master, (Sc. 3) but he is freed by Don Juan's intervention. (Sc. 4.) Our hero meets Amarille who, finding herself seduced and forsaken, reproaches him, but is simply laughed at. (Sc. 5.) After a long discourse between master and servant on the former's way of living, on honour and reputation, and on the plan of stealing, the stout atheist goes to the ghostly supper and, (Sc. 6) in spite of the voices of his friends and (Sc. 7) the ghost's long warnings and invitations to repent, he defies every moral insinuation and is destroyed amid thunder and lightning. Carrille is sorry for the loss of his wages and pronounces the moral.

The account shows that Rosimond gives the plots and even certain episodical scenes common to nearly all Don Juan-dramas:

Molière (following Dorimond and de Villiers) represents only one lady forsaken by Don Juan: Elvire (Amarille); his earliest predecessors and his successors generally have two such unfortunate creatures:

TIRSO: Isabella and Anna,

«CONVITATO»<sup>1)</sup>: Isabella and Anna,

ROSIMOND: Leonora and Oriane (only mentioned),

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<sup>1)</sup> The play generally attributed to Cicognini, by Dräger to Giliberti.



SHADWELL: Leonora and Maria,

DA PONTE: Elvire and Anna.

These adventures are followed by or intermixed with more or less successful attempts on one or two country-girls whose acquaintance he partly makes by an accident on sea and whose particular charm in most cases is their being about to be married, so in

TIRSO: Tisbea and Aminta,

« CONVITATO »: Rosalba and Brunetta,

DORIMOND: Amaranthe and « la mariée »,

DE VILLIERS: Belinde and Oriane,

MOLIÈRE: Mathurine and Charlotte,

ROSIMOND: Thomasse and Paquette,

SHADWELL: Clara and Flavia,

DA PONTE: Zerlina.

As in literature nearly every hero has a servant, partly to contrast with, partly to reflect his master's character, so our Don Juan has a valet, a precursor of Figaro, typical not only for his superior, but also for the author of the particular Don Juan-play, for his country and time:

TIRSO: Catalinon,

« CONVITATO »: Passarino,

COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE: Arlechino,

DORIMOND: Briguelle,

DE VILLIERS: Philippin,

MOLIÈRE: Sganarelle,

ROSIMOND: Carrille,

SHADWELL: Jacomo,

DA PONTE: Leporello.

After all, Don Juan happens to pass the tomb of a high official whom he had killed in an attempt on his daughter, that is: in

TIRSO: Don Gonzalo de Ulloa, comendador, de  
Sevilla,

« CONVITATO »: Comendatore d'Oliola de Seviglia,

DORIMOND: Le commandeur,

DE VILLIERS: » »

MOLIERE: » »

ROSIMOND: Don Pierre, commandeur de Séville,

SHADWELL: Don Pedro, governor of Seville,

DA PONTE: Gouverneur (einer spanischen Stadt).

Don Juan invites the statue of the murdered enemy to supper, the ghost accepts the invitation and invites Don Juan in return; he accepts and is destroyed on the occasion; these three scenes naturally form the end of nearly all Don Juan-dramas (da Ponte has drawn together supper and destruction into one scene, and Goldoni has left away the miraculous part altogether).

But the account given above contains features enough to show, besides the persons of the two friends and the names of some characters, the congruity of Rosimond's and Shadwell's plays in points in which they differ from any other Don Juan-piece: Leonora is convinced of her lover's inconstancy by the cheap dramatic expedient of overhearing his conversation with the servant, herself hidden in an adjacent room. The valet is forced to fly with his master in spite of the same comical excuses. The sacrilegious assault on the temple in favour of Don Felix' love to Dorinde corresponds exactly with Shadwell's episode of the nunnery. And in the confusion arising out of this enterprise the valet unsuccessfully tries to escape from his patron. Once he is even caught and is about to suffer for his master's misdeeds, but is set free by him. In the meeting of Don Juan and Leonora the former advises his late sweetheart to use the same



variety in love as he, with a cynicism with which we should easily credit Shadwell, but which we find even in Rosimond. Carrille-Jacomé escapes the rage of the ocean on a piece of mast for which he feels himself deeply indebted. He is in constant fear of being hanged; he amuses by his pretension to valour and the proofs he gives of cowardice. The poor sisters Thomasse—Clara and Paquette—Flavia are forced to marry unbeloved men. A negative proof is f. i. the fact that in most former Don Juan plays, Molière's included, the hero changes clothes with the valet, an element entirely wanting in Rosimond and Shadwell.

On going more deeply into the conception of the characters we find Shadwell's libertine a true brother to Rosimond's in his atheism, while the Don Juans before Molière's in reality were no atheists, but only very thoughtless and superficial Christians. Tirso's Burlador, as the true Spaniard of his time, seeing matters going wrong, even calls for a confessor and dies a repenting sinner. Molière was the first to make Don Juan a real atheist, and Rosimond copied him in this sense, but the difference between their plays is, that Rosimond's hero is much more of a philosopher than Molière's, though we cannot see in the latter's only a «pauvre logicien» as Fournel<sup>1)</sup> calls him. Removing the whole play into heathen times La Rose profited by his master's disagreeable experience and so avoided the opposition which the author of «Tartuffe» and «Dom Juan» had met with. Shadwell had no need of this anachronistic disguise, so he showed Don John a downright villainous unbeliever amongst godly Christians, but laid the same stress on philosophical foundation as Rosimond. It was not a very

<sup>1)</sup> l. c. p. 320.

happy idea of the latter to make Don Juan a thief; Shadwell, of course, followed him also in this point of doubtful heroism.

There is, at last, a resemblance in the technical side of the two plays in question, both excelling by the «superbes ornements de théâtre» which were the boast of the Théâtre du Marais and of the English stage and formed a remarkable contrast to Molière's simplicity in scenery and other externals.

These substantial *congruities* are seconded by a series of even *textual* ones. It is true, there are not only certain scenes, especially of the statue-part (where even Shadwell resigns his mask of originality), but also certain words running through the long file of Don Juan-dramas. F. i. the inscription on the statue runs thus

in TIRSO (III. 8): Aquí aguarda del Señor  
El mas leal caballero  
La venganza de un traidor;

in the «CONVITATO» (III):  
Di chi a torto mi trasse a morte ria  
Dal ciel qui attendo la vendetta mia;

in ROSIMOND (Molière does not mention the epitaphe)  
(III. 7): Dom Pierre par la main d'un traître  
Dans Séville a reçu la mort . . . .  
. . . . Dom Juan a commis ce forfait odieux. . . .

in SHADWELL (IV. 3, p. 161): Here lies Don Pedro,  
Governor of Sevil, barbarously murdered by  
that impious villain Don John, 'gainst whom  
his innocent blood cries still for vengeance.

in DA PONTE (II. 3): Die Rache erwartet hier meinen  
Mörder.

Even in less important and less impressive scenes we may trace some words literally transmitted from play to play, from one language into the other, f. i. Don Juan after his shipwreck swears in a momentary flirtation:

TIRSO (I. 13): Juro, ojos bellos  
Que mirando me matais  
De ser vuestro esposo.

*Tisbea*: Advierte, mi bien, que hay Dios, y que  
hay muerte.

« CONVITATO » (I): Se io no gli do la mano di sposo,  
poss'io esser ammazzato da un uomo, ma che  
sia di pietra.

ROSIMOND (II. 3): Ma belle, je jure . . . .

*Càrrille*: Mon maître, ne jurez pas de peur  
d'être parjure.

SHADWELL (III. 5, p. 142): If all the oaths under the  
sun can convince you, Madam, I swear . . . .

*Jacomo*: O Sir, Sir, have a care of swearing; for  
fear you should, once in your life, be forsworn.

Another specimen: the valet after the shipwreck:

TIRSO (I. 9): ¡Válgame la Cananea  
Y qué salado está el mar! . . .  
¿Donde Dios juntó tanta agua,  
No juntara tanto vino?

COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE (II., in translation):

Du vin, du vin, du vin, assez d'eau comme  
cela.

ROSIMOND (II. 1):

Je suis résolu, pour me remettre enfin  
Ayant bu de l'eau, de boire bien du vin.



SHADWELL (III, 4, p. 136): Where may a man light on  
a glass of wine? I would gladly have an  
antidote to my poison.

But we find in Shadwell passages whose original source is in Molière only, but as they all occur also in Rosimond, there is no need to assume any direct connection between Poquelin and the English writer. And in most cases the resemblance between Rosimond and Shadwell is stronger than that between Rosimond and Molière or between Molière and Shadwell. At last there are literal congruities which we find exclusively in Claude and Thomas. In the quotations given below the examples drawn from Molière, if there are such at all, have been detached from their context, while those from Rosimond and Shadwell occur in the same order of thought.

The following is from the scene between Don Juan's valet and one of the forsaken ladies (or, at least with her servant, so in Molière):

{	(MOLIÈRE (I. 1), <i>Gusman</i> : Les saints noeuds du mariage le tiennent engagé.)
	ROSIMOND (I. 1), <i>Leonora</i> : L'ingrat me promettait qu'il serait mon époux.
	SHADWELL (I. 2, p. 99), <i>Leonora</i> : He promised he would marry me.

{	(MOLIÈRE, <i>Sganarelle</i> : ... C'est un épouseur à toutes mains.)
	ROSIMOND, <i>Carrillon</i> : Mon maître épouserait, je crois, toute la terre.
	SHADWELL, <i>Jacomo</i> : If we were to live here one month longer, he would marry half the town.

- (MOLIÈRE, *Sganarelle*: Suffit qu'il faut que le courroux  
du ciel l'accable quelque jour.)  
ROSIMOND, *Leonora*: Mais quoi, ne craint-il pas les  
éclats du tonnerre?  
SHADWELL, *Leonora*: Does he not fear a thunderbolt  
from heaven?  
ROSIMOND, *Carrillon*: Madame, il n'admet point de  
dieux que son caprice.  
SHADWELL, *Jacomo*: He owns no deity but his  
voluptuous appetite.

In the meeting between Don Juan and the lady instantly in question (Elvire—Leonora), a scene common to Molière, Rosimond, and Shadwell, we may compare:

- (MOLIÈRE (I. 3), *Elvire*: Le même ciel dont tu te joues  
me saura venger de ta per-  
fidie.)  
ROSIMOND (I. 3), *Leonora*: Va, suis l'emportement de  
ton âme infidèle. Les dieux  
embrasseront cette juste  
querelle.  
SHADWELL (II. 2), *Leonora*: Heaven, sure, will punish  
this vile treachery.  
(MOLIÈRE, *Don Juan*: Sganarelle! Le Ciel! —  
*Sganarelle*: Vraiment oui, nous nous  
moquons bien de cela.)  
ROSIMOND, *Don Juan*: Ne les règlez point [les dieux]  
suivant votre intérêt. Laissez-  
les, s'il en est, agir comme il  
leur plaît.  
SHADWELL, *Don John*: Do you then leave it to heaven  
and trouble yourself no  
further about it.

The following is a specimen of literal transmission of philosophical passages:

ROSIMOND (III. 4):

Songez que la nature est tout ce qui nous mène;  
Que malgré la raison son pouvoir nous entraîne;  
... Que l'on ne doit souffrir rien que ses sens pour guides,  
Qu'il les faut assouvir jusqu' aux moindres désirs  
Et n'avoir point d'égards qu'à ses propres plaisirs.

SHADWELL (I. 1, p. 94):

Nature gave us our senses which we please;  
Nor does our reason war against the sense.  
By nature's order sense should guide our reason.  
In spite of thee [conscience] we'll surfeit in delights  
And never think ought can be ill that's pleasant.

How closely Shadwell sometimes followed his model in a most insignificant allusion we see in the following comparison. Don Juan has revealed his stratagem against the temple or the nunnery:

ROSIMOND (II. 6), *Don Juan*:

Dans Ephèse un grand cœur fit la même action,  
Et j'avais de tout temps pareille ambition;  
Il s'immortalisa par ce trait de courage . . . .

SHADWELL (V. 1, p. 168):

*Jacomo*: What became of that brave fellow who  
fired the temple at Ephesus? . . . .

*Don Antonio*: We are his rivals, fool; and who would  
not suffer for so brave an action?

A comparison of the passages portraying the supper-scene shows the substantial congruity of all Don Juan-plays and, at the same time, the textual accordance of Rosimond and Shadwell.



TIRSO (III. 11), *Don Juan*: Cena habrá para los dos....

Ya puesta la mesa está. Siéntate.

The statue takes practically part in the supper.

« CONVITATO » (III), *Statua*: Non ha bisogno di cibi  
terreni chi è fuori di vita mortale.

MOLIÈRE (IV. 12), *Don Juan*: Une chaise et un couvert.

Vite donc! (Don Juan et la  
statue se mettent à table) ...

*Statue*: C'est assez.

ROSIMOND (IV. 4),

*Don Juan*: Tu viens à temps pour faire bonne chère,

Et si tu veux manger tu peux te satisfaire.

Goûte de ce morceau. Quoi! tu ne

manges pas?

*L'Ombre*: Je viens point ici pour faire un repas.

. . . . . Les Dieux, justes censeurs de chaque créature

M'ont permis d'animer cette roide figure,

Et je viens par leur ordre, apprendre

ici de toi

Si tu veux persister dans ton manque de foi.

SHADWELL (IV. 4, p. 164),

*Don John*: Here's excellent meat; taste of this ragoust.

[The ragoust is mentioned in Rosimond

p. 361 when Carrille prepares supper.] If

you had had a body of flesh, I would

have given you « cher entire » — but

women care not for marble. ... Come, eat.

*Ghost*: I come not here to take repast with you;

Heaven has permitted me to animate

This marble body and I come to warn

You of that vengeance is in store for you,

If you amend not your pernicious lives.

DA PONTE (II. 1),

*Don Juan*: Leporello! Frisch, Gedecke! Die Minute!

*Gouverneur*: Bleib, ich befehl's.

Wen erlabend die Himmlischen nähren,  
Kann der irdischen Nahrung entbehren.

One example may be given where, against our stated rule, Rosimond and Molière correspond exactly in the dramatic situation, but where Shadwell uses the same really comical « clou », only under somewhat different circumstances. In his mass-meeting of victims our English libertine employs the same evasive answer to their claims as Molière's Don Juan had used to Mathurine and Charlotte, and Rosimond's to Paquette and Thomasse.

MOLIÈRE (II. 5):

Vous soutenez également toutes deux que je vous ai promis de vous prendre pour femmes. Est-ce que chacune de vous ne sait pas ce qui en est, sans qu'il soit nécessaire que je m'explique davantage? . . . . On verra, quand je me marierai, laquelle des deux a mon cœur [— and he assures either that she is the happy one].

ROSIMOND (II. 4):

Pour mettre d'accord chacune à votre attente,  
Je veux épouser celle à qui je l'ai promis.

SHADWELL (II. 3, p. 116):

Well, ladies, know then, I am married to one in this company, and to-morrow morning if you will repair to this place, I will declare my marriage which now, for some secret reasons, I am obliged to conceal. — (Aside:) Now will each strumpet think 'tis her I mean.



So far it appears to be sure that *Shadwell followed Rosimond* and that *he knew Molière only as far as he is contained in Rosimond*. But we go farther and say that *he had no other literary source at all than Rosimond*. For the bulk of resemblances between Shadwell's play and the Don Juan-tradition *Rosimond* suffices for explanation, and there are only a few minor episodes and dramatic expedients in Shadwell on one hand and in Spanish, Italian or French plays on the other, which are not in *Rosimond*. This fact, it is true, might make us believe that the English dramatist used other sources besides *Rosimond*. There is, first of all, the figure of the hermit corresponding in some measure with Molière's famous «*scène du pauvre*» and with the pious pilgrim in former plays. There is, besides, the lady's letter which by mistake falls into Don Juan's hands and enables him to take her lover's place in Maria's (Anna's in Tirso) bedroom. Shadwell's Don John disarms the avenging angel Maria in her disguise, Dorimond's Don Juan, himself disguised, disarms Don Philippe who follows him to avenge Amarille. In the Spanish drama as well as in the English tragedy the hero returns the kind reception which he met with after his accident on sea by fleeing with his servant on his host's own horses, besides breaking the peace of his family by seductive attempts on the daughters of the house. Generally, as in Dorimond and Mozart, the servant is on the look-out while his master is engaged in a particular adventure; Shadwell employs him in this capacity in the attack on the nunnery leaving him behind as «*Centinel*» (the misprints or miswritings of foreign words are remarkably numerous). Jacomo frightens away the shepherds, as Briguelle had done with the



« archers et prévost ». The *Commedia dell'arte* already had suppressed the figure of Don Juan's father, but he had appeared in Tirso warning his son of heaven's punishment, and Molière laid on Don Louis' lips the words which shocked the nobility of Versailles: « La naissance n'est rien où la vertu n'est pas ». With Rosimond this character is partly retained in Don Gaspard. Shadwell's Don John has already killed his father, who therefore has to appear as a ghost. Another, very striking feature is, that in Rosimond, the fates of Leonora and Oriane being once settled, these girls appear no more, while in most other plays, f. i. in Tirso, Molière, Shadwell, Mozart, one or both follow him either for revenge or from love. — Mesnard claims the famous « scène du pauvre » as Molière's genuine invention. Certainly no poet either before or after Poquelin has made so much out of this incident, insignificant as it is by itself, as the great French comedian — and nobody knew it better than he himself, the scene being the very point of attack for the clergy — but the meeting with a pious pilgrim had become a traditional episode of the play; Shadwell, as usual, made it a disgusting show of brutish sensuality (scene with the hermit, p. 131).

Now, is it probable that Shadwell struck on all these incidents which he could not find in Rosimond, quite independently of other Don Juan-dramas which contain them? In some cases this may be possible and Rosimond's words in I. 2 (Don Juan tells Carrille how he managed to enjoy Oriane): « J'avais su m'introduire en son appartement » might without great difficulty suggest such means as a misplaced letter and the lover's disguise. But the whole scene resembles so strongly a corresponding one in Tirso that

chiefly this episode may have led to the belief that Shadwell copied from other sources besides Rosimond. Perhaps this and the rest of the noted problems may be solved, if we attribute Shadwell's information of these incidents to the same «*worthy gentleman*» alluded to in the preface, who many years before, had seen the play acted in Italy and perhaps even in Paris where also a Spanish troupe (de Prado) used to play from 1659—1672.<sup>1)</sup>

In considering some arguments which speak strongly against a closer study by our English poet of the sources of his play, it is by means of that «*worthy gentleman*» from Italy that we are induced to explain Shadwell's congruities with other sources than Rosimond. In the preface he boasts that this tragedy was written in 23 days («the playhouse having great occasion for a play»). This certainly does not speak in favour of a sound study of the subject. It is true, he might have studied it before, but we cannot expect him to have taken the trouble to read, besides Rosimond, also Tirso, Giliberti, Dorimond, de Villiers and Molière. This would seem very strange indeed in a man who explains the numerous English imitations of French plays in the following way<sup>2)</sup>: «'Tis not barrenness of wit or invention that makes us borrow from the French, but laziness».

Yet, after all, the «*Libertine*» is far from being a mere translation of the «*Nouveau festin de Pierre*». There are *differences* between the two works, differences in form and in substance; but most of them are typical

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<sup>1)</sup> Cokayne's «Ovid» is not within our reach, but the hero being an entirely different person and Shadwell referring to foreign plays exclusively, we may leave it out of the question.

<sup>2)</sup> Preface to the «*Miser*».



of the two poets and of their countries. What English playwrights missed in their French models was «action» and we may sum up the differences to the following result: *Shadwell has suppressed the reflective part and increased the action of Rosimond's play.* The best example of the latter process is Don Juan's adventure with Oriane-Maria which in Rosimond's version the hero only relates to Carrille while in Shadwell it fills two very lively scenes and causes the removal of the interview of Don Juan and Leonora with its prelude into the second act. Even then the story is not yet finished, but, as in former plays, it is extended together with the Leonora-plot as far as the third and fourth act, where Maria exercises a decisive influence over Don Juan's proceedings by marring his plans against Clara and Flavia. The parallel course of these two actions, especially that interesting contrast of motives, must be of Shadwell's own invention; it is rather cleverly drawn out and forms one of the few original elements of the tragedy.

On this occasion we observe another difference: While in Rosimond's play the various plots form a loosely bound chain of events, the action in Shadwell's is more intricate and therefore more interesting. The officer and guards who pursue Don John in V. 2 correspond with the traditional «prévost and archers», but we know that they come upon the call of the shepherds to avenge the seduced shepherdesses, while in Rosimond we do not see well what they come for. Paquette and Thomasse are for ever silenced by the promise of a sum of money, while Clara and Flavia turn up again in the last scene but one, a surprise for the spectator, and a pleasant one for Don John. And the imposing assembly of the ghosts of his victims



at the end of the drama, where all the strings of the various actions run together, is from a merely dramatic standpoint, a very clever « coup de théâtre », even if not quite original — may we think of Shakespeare's Richard III.?

The number of horrors in the ante-cedents is considerably augmented. While in Molière we hear of Don Juan's unfortunate adventure on sea and his escape from the lips of Pierrot, Rosimond represents at least the rescue of Carrille, but Shadwell goes farther still and shows us first the whole company on shipboard in a terrible storm (a scene whose merit of originality perhaps diminishes if we think of Shakespeare's « Tempest » I. 1), then the recovery of Don Juan and his friends, later on of Jacomo, and in the meantime we hear how the hermit helped to save Leonora and Maria.

Rosimond's plot of Amarille, the seduced rural bride, was only modified or so-to-say generalized into the adventure with the shepherds and nymphs, with which it has many features in common.

On the other hand Shadwell entirely dropped the figure of Don Gaspard who in fact has nothing to do with the action (Shadwell only took up his offer of shelter and incorporated it in the tenant's servant, p. 169) and serves merely as a contrast to Don Juan's atheism. Perhaps the English dramatist imitated him partly in his hermit, but if he left this altogether indistinct person with his rather tiring moral sermons quite out of the way, he did well. At any rate the ghost of Don John's father served his purpose better. Perhaps it was for the same reason, i. e. to avoid long reflections and philosophical discourses that Shadwell renounced Rosimond's idea of characterizing Don Juan's

friends separately. For the supper-party scene which fills Rosimond's fourth act, Shadwell left away that long introductory conversation about different courses and methods in love-pursuits. Rosimond wearies the spectator and reader by his philosophy, while Shadwell manages to mark out Don John as a philosophical hero more by occasional hints, at least he does so towards the end of his tragedy.

So far we might compliment Shadwell for his variations from his model. In technique his work appears to be superior to Rosimond's. There are some other, more arbitrary or occasional differences in the construction of the two literary buildings:

The opening-scene is Shadwell's own (handy-) work, but we cannot admire him for it, a true poet would have developed his characters without such a formal introduction and such obtrusive characterisation. In the « Miser » the first scene (one of those few which Crull may call « original » ones) has the same purpose, viz. to acquaint us with the hero Theodore and his couple of friends, a creation of Shadwell's own, while Molière enters in medias res. — Don Juan's interview with Leonora is interrupted by the entrance of six women, but this is only an intermezzo and the action continues afterwards as in Rosimond by the entrance of the two worthy friends. — The inn-keeper Ormin has become a country-gentleman Don Francisco. Putting the enforced betrothal of his daughters into the past the author wins time for his — as he will think — interesting ethnological excursion to Spain. — The adventure with the nunnery is removed into the last act. — In the statue-part the greatest but unimportant difference is that in Rosimond's play Don Félix and Don Lope are not present when Don Juan invites the mo-



nument, so he must explain the matter to them and loses the time of nearly a whole scene over it. With Shadwell they survive the first supper and are destroyed a few moments before Don John himself; so they have no time to warn him by their mysterious voices. Shadwell's last scene surpasses all its rivals in the splendour of its supernatural apparitions and the grandeur of heaven's revenge.

In the relation of the characters to each other the only difference of importance is that between Don Juan and his friends. Rosimond makes them his superiors, his evil spirits who misled him to that wicked way of living. In this way Don Juan loses our interest not only by its being divided between three individuals, but because the «tragical guilt» is taken off the shoulders of the hero who therefore is less interesting<sup>1)</sup>. Shadwell — whether consciously or not we do not venture to decide — amended the latter fault by inverting the mutual dependency of the three worthies, by making Don Antonio and Don Lopez pupils and admirers of Don John. — Carrille seems to occupy a higher place in his master's household than Jacomo and is treated more civilly by Don Juan, but in exactly the same ironical way by Don Felix and Don Lopez.

There is another set of dramatic expedients which we find nowhere but in Shadwell's drama<sup>2)</sup>, but for which we cannot credit Shadwell, as they are very *common attractions of the English stage* of the time: those lyrical insertions (by the bye, of very little lyrical value) as the two serenades (pp. 103, 104), Don Juan's

<sup>1)</sup> Fournel l. c. p. 319.

<sup>2)</sup> Beljame p. 37, note 2. Also the following examples are taken from Beljame,



p. 117) and Clara's songs (p. 139), the chorus of shepherds and nymphs (p. 156), are only specimens of the artistic taste of that literary period which could affix «a Grand Masque danced before Cæsar and Cleopatra» to a translation of Corneille's «Pompée», the period which enjoyed Shakespeare's «Macbeth» arranged as an opera (by D'Avenant) and «Romeo and Juliet» as a comedy. The musical tragedy gave birth to the English dramatic opera. — Shadwell himself only two years before had written his «Psyche» which looks rather more like a libretto than an independent tragedy (the scenery alone cost £<sup>o</sup> 800). — Dryden and D'Avenant had arranged a ballet danced by a chorus of demons some years before Shadwell, in the «Tempest».

In no former Don Juan-play do we find a girl disguised «in man's habits» as Maria in the «Libertine». But also for this stroke of genius we are not indebted to Shadwell exclusively. Charles II. had introduced the pleasant institution of «women-actors» (the word «actress» not yet being formed) in his blessed island, and the latest «clou» in the seventies was not only to bring women on to the stage, but to put them into man's attire. In this disguise Maria flattered the most «refined» taste of the spectators, like «Little Miss Ariell» whom Mrs. Aphra Behn made pronounce an epilogue of very doubtful morality.

At last there may be some features really «very much varied from anything which has been done upon the subject». One of these «*original*» traits may be, that in Shadwell Don Pedro was killed for the sake of his sisters, and that likewise Maria's brother is murdered in his attempt to save or avenge his sister's honour, while generally it is the father who falls on

the occasion. — (Maria denotes her enemy in a somewhat roundabout way to Don Francisco [whom we suppose far away from Seville] as: «This is the villain who killed the lover of Antonio's sister» (p. 152). It is doubtful whether Don Francisco understood whom she meant.)

In Shadwell's really «original» parts we find some considerable mistakes and confusions, besides several incidents for which we see no reason, turns of the action which we cannot account for, improbabilities for which we can hardly afford poetical licence. Maria's raging fury before Don Francisco does not look very convincing; we should rather think her mad as Don John insinuates. After the shipwreck we suppose our friends far away from Seville, at any rate they must be out of town. But then, how can Don Antonio say of Maria (p. 153) «A foolish impostor! We ne'er saw Seville till last night» to Don Francisco? As to the question of dramatic localisation it is very strange, besides, that after their flight from Seville and from Don Francisco's they go back to the former place so near as to light on Don Pedro's tomb. When Don John wishes to get married to Clara he assures her that he has a priest in his company ready for the occasion. In any other place this would offer no difficulty at all, priests being to be had at any time, place, and cost for such purposes under the later Stuarts and in the drama of their time. But in this peculiar case we do not see how Don John managed to be married with a priest's sanction to Clara and Flavia the first night he spent in the solitary country-house. Suspicion might fall on one of his friends who would have counterfeited the reverend gentleman, but neither of them seems to know ought of it next morning.



Clara and Flavia are simply ridiculous in their plans of revenge: «Now we'll have your lives!» (p. 172) — 'Two probationers against three gallants! — The song of the shepherds suffers from the general unreality of pastoral poetry. How do those «innocent» shepherds know of «the filthy steams(!) from their [the townpeople's] excess of meat, and cloudy vapours raised from dangerous wine» (p. 157). And after hearing the song (p. 158):

Nymphs and shepherds, come away;  
In these groves let's sport and play,  
Where each day is a holiday,  
Sacred to ease and happy love,  
To dancing, music, poetry . . . .

those unlucky townpeople might have asked: «Have these shepherds nothing else to do?»

On their way to supper, what have our friends to do in the church? The inscription on the statue is of unreasonable fierceness. The statue is too talkative, while in Molière the stone-monument speaks with the solemn reserve becoming such a ghostly apparition. But in the last scene we feel distinctly that the play — was written in 23 days: In IV. 1 (p. 151) Don John had recognised Maria in spite of her disguise, and yet in V. 3 (p. 175) he calls her «the young hot-headed fool we killed at Francisco's». She seems to haunt the place in the unwomanly attire she was killed in, but even if she could not afford a new dress for the solemn occasion we cannot conceive why he did not recognise her again.

Though the material differences be small, the two plays in question make quite a different impression on the reader, though perhaps less on the spectator. It is because of that process of *grossification* (if the



word be allowed) by which the French play was changed into a suitable English one and which secured its success. Some examples drawn from a «statistical table of horrors» set up during the reading of the «Libertine» have already been given (p. 9), some more may follow. Shadwell is not satisfied with the two ladies who appear in the first act, the one already seduced, the other ravished in its course, with the double Clara-Flavia plot and with the pastoral adventure, but he throws in that half dozen of «women, all wives to Don John» who happen to call on him all at once, while fifteen more are waiting without as Jacomo informs us. He has not even taken the trouble to name them, but calls them simply by their number, f. i. (p. 119)

*Don Lopez*: Yes, I assure you, we must ravish.

*4<sup>th</sup> woman*: No, monster, I'll prevent you.

(Stabs herself.)

Carrille says of his master (I. 1):

Tout pour son appétit est d'un égal usage,  
Il met impunément belle ou laide au pillage.

Of course, also Don John is hot upon any female being «ugly or handsome, old or young» (p. 99), but to prove this want of refinement, he sends his servant into the street with the order: «Force in the next woman you meet»; this being an ugly old woman he addresses her: «Come on, Beldam, thy face shall not protect thee» (p. 121). — Don Felix only wants to win his dear Dorinde out of the temple; Shadwell arranges a wild orgy on the occasion with half a dozen nuns involved in the «stratagem». He indulges in occasional lights thrown on Don John's doings, f. i. «I committed a rape upon my father's monument last

night» (p. 110). He becomes most disgusting in IV. 2 (p. 161) where the shepherds are about to castrate poor Jacomo. The «gentleman's» favourite addresses to his servant are «I'll cut your throat, your ears, your nose, I'll saw your wind-pipe, I'll rip you from the navel to the chin». — Tirso and Dorimond can do with one murder, that of the father of one of Don Juan's victims; de Villiers, less delicate, causes also her lover to be killed; Molière only hints at the murder of the «commandeur» which is said to have been committed six months before the time when the play begins, so he has no blood flowing on the stage. Also Rosimond and Shadwell remove the death of Don Pedro backwards, then they add to it the murder of Don John's father. But in the attempt on Oriane (who seems to be another commander's daughter) only her lover Bernard is said to have been killed, while our English Don John runs down, before our eyes, Maria's lover Octavio and her brother Antonio. So the plot of the avenger killed is repeated and Molière's tasteful removal of the bloody scene compensated. Then Leonora, Maria, and Don Francisco, besides several servants, guards, and shepherds meet their deaths from his hand.

This wholesale-murder and rape, together with the dreadful supper at church drawn out into any possible length, form a striking contrast to the elegant French play of the greatest of comedians<sup>1)</sup> and excel by far anything done upon the subject before or after.

<sup>1)</sup> If we sometimes refer for comparison to Molière, it is, of course, not for any direct literary connection, but only for esthetical valuation.



### III.

## Characters, Plots, and Episodes and their Valuation.

Having marked this principal feature viz. the grossness, of Shadwell's work, the one feature that distinguishes it from any other period of English or foreign literature, the one that makes the first reading of works of this epoch so repugnant, we go on to consider the several characters and plots and begin with *Don John*.

Tirso's Burlador is the true Spaniard of his epoch, even if we cannot see in him the «splendid satire» on social life and manners of the poet's country and time which he has been considered to be. Molière's Dom Juan is the elegant courtier of Versailles under Louis XIV. with his three talents: «perdre des femmes, tenir l'épée ferme, ne pas payer ses dettes». <sup>1)</sup> And Shadwell's «Libertine» is the common «scowrer» (as the technical term went) of London under Charles II., whose chief occupation is to drink, to whore, to beat constables etc., or as Don John expresses it in a more poetical and philosophical way (I, 1, p. 93):

<sup>1)</sup> Molière. Ed. des Grands Ecrivains V, p. 32.



Thus far without a bound we have enjoyed  
Our prosperous pleasures, which dull fools call sins;  
Laughed at old feeble judges and weak laws;  
And at the fond fantastick think called conscience,  
Which serves for nothing but to make men cowards;  
An idle fear of future misery;  
And is yet worse than all that we can fear.

*Catalan's co  
Don Juan's conscience*

Don Antonio and Don Lopez echo his philosophical opinions dwelling on the inconvenience of conscience in a way to let us know that they and their master have studied Shakespeare well enough:

*Hamlet*: Thus conscience does make cowards

of us all.<sup>1)</sup>

Shadwell, like Rosimond, endeavours to represent his hero as a *philosophical* libertine and makes him justify his wickedness by a lot of should-be scientific explanations, sputtering out psychological terms as «sense, reason, mind, object, will, understanding» &c. in such a way as to raise our suspicions as to his own understanding. At any rate his philosophy culminates in the maxim: «Nought can be ill that's pleasant» (p. 94), and the thought «If we be bad, 'tis nature's fault that made us so» (p. 132) excuses every extravagance of the passions alluded to in his words (p. 195):

Youth is a fruit that can but once be gathered  
And I'll enjoy it to the full.

It is the fashionable moral of the day which Rochester expressed as follows: «Our sphere of action is life's happiness, and he who thinks beyond thinks like an ass».<sup>2)</sup> But already Don John's continental brethren had excused their wickedness by natural inclinations

<sup>1)</sup> By the bye also the expression «most foul unnatural murder» reminds us literally of Shakespeare (*Hamlet*).

<sup>2)</sup> Rochester, *Satire against man* (quoted by Beljame).

and the passions of youth. Even before his «salto mortale»<sup>1)</sup> he sticks to his sophistical justification: being called to repent he answers: «Couldst thou bestow another heart on me, I might, but with this heart I have, I cannot».

By his philosophy he is not only a stout *atheist* who braves heaven and hell in their most dreadful elements, but he expresses his deep contempt for religion and church by deeds that would shock the freest of freethinkers. A crime committed in church seems to have a charm of its own, and there appears to be a particular flavour in gallant enterprises upon nunneries, to say nothing of other kinds of sacrilege such as robbing the church of her plate. He has a particular grudge against priests and hypocrites with their «private delicious sins» (p. 94). Giacomo's warnings of hell's punishment he calls «Idle tales, found out by priests to keep the rabble in awe» (p. 110). When asking the hermit to provide for a strumpet he adds: «I know you Zealots have enough of 'em». (p. 131.)

If Shadwell wanted to show whither natural philosophy and atheism practically lead, he has done more than enough, in fact by far too much, to convince us. He tried to represent Don John as an elegant *cavalier*, some sparks of Molière's profligate but truly «chevaleresque» hero being blown across the «Swamp» (le théâtre du Marais) and the Channel. But there are only faint traces of that knight who without a moment's hesitation ran to the rescue of an unknown gentleman (Don Carlos) against a majority of robbers. The Libertine certainly shows some marks of knightly breeding, f. i. in sparing Maria's life (p. 124). Our

<sup>1)</sup> Farinelli l. c.



butcherly Don John is, at the same time, a brilliant poet; his serenade to Maria:

«Thou joy of all hearts and delight of all eyes» (p. 103) is not only a pretty decent piece of poetry, but certainly more poetical than his rival's pastoral hymn to Chloris which, on the other hand, would suit better the taste of that time. His knightly boast consists chiefly in physical force and excellent fencing: «I ran him [Don Pedro] through the lungs as handsomely, and killed him as decently, and as like a gentleman, as could be» (p. 96). We need not admire his courage against numerous enemies such as the guards, remembering what a ridiculous institution the police-force used to be in the 17<sup>th</sup> century; but there is some noble blood in his veins which explains his love of danger often displayed f. i. in «The more danger, the more delight, I hate the common road of pleasure» (p. 104). He thinks nothing of the lives of his fellow-creatures f. i. his own father's or Don Pedro's, but he himself does not fear death either; with the words «'Tis but drowning at last» (p. 128) he meets the thought of shipwreck. Another noble feature in him is his love of fame expressed as follows: «He's a scoundrel and a poultron that would not have his death for his fame» (p. 168). An oath sworn to a woman «is nothing but a way of speaking, which young amorous fellows have gotten» (p. 111), but having accepted the ghost's invitation to supper he «would not break his word for a thousand doubloons» (p. 173). He can show the bearing of an accomplished gentleman and ventures to stand upon ceremonies even in the presence of supernatural apparitions, f. i. of Don Pedro's ghost: «'Tis something ill-bred to rail at your host that treats you civilly» (p. 165), or, speaking of



the same: « He would not sure be so ill-bred, to make us wait on him on foot » (p. 174); he regrets not to have had the opportunity to treat the chorus of devils with « burnt brandy » (p. 165). He laughs cynically at the fourth woman's suicide (p. 119), and yet Leonora's love and death touch even his cruel heart for a moment (p. 149).

But the way he treats his own father before and after death, the cruel and vile tyranny exercised on poor Jack, his cowardly, more clever than noble « stratagems » in his attempts on Maria and the nunnery, his cold humour in laughing at the poor mariners « puzzled which death to choose, burning or drowning » (p. 130), all these features rob him of the sympathy which we in a certain measure feel for Molière's and which we else, in a very small degree, should feel even for Shadwell's hero. In Don John's relations with the *other sex*, the author sinks into the deepest and dirtiest cynicism. Molière's Dom Juan has many victims, but he has married them all in lawful wedlock; with Shadwell marriage is the last expedient to win the game, used only when mere promise, seduction or rape will not do. Don John is supposed to be a fascinating young man and Leonora describes him as a fervent and languishing lover, trained in all the rules of courtship (— which Shadwell could know from Molière-Rosimond); but when we see him personally making love to Clara and Flavia, we find his flatteries rather awkward and uncouth, considering that they are addressed not to simple fisher-girls, but to gentleman's daughters. In his « love of variety in love » we hear an echo of Molière's clever psychological observation, but degraded into the foulest sensuality and expressed by a decided predilection

for maidenheads which we find already in Fletcher's «Wild Goose Chase»<sup>1)</sup> and in Tirso's «Burlador», a reason, further, for his particular fancy for nunneries. Molière's Elvire also has been taken out of a convent, but by her own consent. — Don John's ideas about marriage lie in the words: «These are certain animals called wives» (p. 117) and «I hate unreasonable fellows who, when they are weary of their wives, will still keep 'em from other men. Gentlemen, ye shall command mine» (p. 118). The author sacrifices all «poetical» probability to show the wickedness of his hero when Don John and his friends, having hardly escaped shipwreck, stand dripping wet on the coast, ask the hermit for — a whore, and enter into a long discourse about morality. He loses our last bit of interest when we see him hot upon any female being «ugly or handsome, old or young: Nothing that's female comes amiss him» (p. 99). He confesses his principle in the attempt on the shepherdesses: «I am not in love, but in lust, and to such a one, a belly full's a belly full».

Don John's character, as drawn out by Shadwell, is simply impossible. The writer did not see him before his mind's eye, but only on the paper. Such a man loses our interest, in spite of the grand moment of his death. In fact, he is no man, much less an «Übermensch»; he is — taking off the philosophical disguise loosely put on him — a beast!

While our author has shown himself unable to represent a hero, he succeeds better in minor characters such as *Don Antonio* and *Don Lopez*, as far as they are his own creation. They are of the same stamp as Don John, they disgust us by the same beastly lewdness and the same cynical frankness in the show

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<sup>1)</sup> Farinelli, G. St., p. 58.



of it; they are brutal ruffians and common «scowlers», the only interesting thing about them is their relation to their superior friend and teacher. The difference of the «sublime» frivolity of this patron-saint of all flirts and the imitated profligacy of his followers is marked distinctly and not without some clever strokes of psychological observation. They echo their master's opinions and try to imitate his heroic exploits; their servile spirits content themselves with the maids of the ladies Clara and Flavia to whose enjoyment they have helped their model-libertine, and with any wretched creature that Don John will bestow on them; they are satisfied, so-to-say, with the crumbs that fall from their lord's table. His presence inspires in them a certain amount of courage against guards, shepherds, ghosts, and even death, though they are not so stout-hearted as he. They boast of the same love of fame, but they often fly when danger approaches, and they do not shrink from cowardly robbery. While Don John deals with Jacomo in cruel brutality, they treat the poor fellow with contemptuous interest certainly not devoid of wit; they mock him for his «valour» and make sport of his piety. The short dialogues between the two companions and the victim of their irony are perhaps the most relishable passages in the play. But the finest artistic touch about them is the mutual distrust of these two great friends and fellow-villains. In III. 6 (p. 146) they meet Maria (in her disguise) and Leonora:

*Don Lopez:* Do you carry that young gentleman, bind him to a tree, and bring the money, while I wait upon the lady.

*Don Antonio:* Will you play me no foul play in the mean time then? For we must cast lots about the business you wot of.



As we have heard, the author confesses in the preface: «The character of the 'Libertine', and consequently those of his friends, are borrowed». How are we to understand that «consequently»? Does he acknowledge the two minor characters to be the «consequence» of Rosimond's model, or does he pretend to have formed them after the pattern of his own Don John? At any rate, with a real poet such a loan would in no way involve so close an imitation; he might at least have laid some slight difference between the two types to render them more interesting; but so they are in fact one and the same person, and this person is a weak copy of Don John. The way of bringing them into the conversation is somewhat artificial or rather mechanical; they are generally thrust in together, so when Don Antonio has spoken we are pretty sure that Don Lopez will follow instantly.

Shadwell's most original characters in most cases are comical, and the best, the most interesting person of the play is *Jacomo*, Don John's man. He is perhaps the only one the author was up to, because he afforded plenty of opportunity for showing faculties as a wit for which Shadwell was renowned in London society.

In the account of the play given above there was little opportunity to mention *Jacomo*, although we meet him nearly in every scene. This would not be the case with his Spanish brother *Catalinon*, but Italian comedians developed this character into the *arlechino*, the clown who is everywhere without having any business to be there but to entertain the public by his «lazzi» and to reflect the character of his master. Molière has formed the striking contrast between the atheistical gentleman and his honestly

believing valet, that harmless, faithful, but rather weak-headed Sganarelle. Shadwell degraded him, but his Jacomo still amuses us by his continuous fear of being hanged, his several unsuccessful attempts to fly, his moral principles, his greediness, hypocrisy, and pretension to valour. His conversation generally is witty, though often of a coarse kind of humour. F.i. he is afraid of being caught one day in Don John's company and punished with him: «I cannot tell what is the reason, but I have such an unconquerable antipathy to hemp, I could never endure a bell-rope; hanging is a kind of death I cannot abide; I am not able to endure it» (p. 110). — Yet he dares not leave his master for fear of revenge, because «though he is a rogue, he is a necessary rogue» (p. 141). Sometimes he ventures to warn his master: «I cannot but admire, since you are to go to the devil, that you cannot be content with the common way of travelling, but must ride post to him» (p. 109). He is of comical cleverness in finding excuses for not going on the sea (he pretends to have ordered horses, to get seasick, not to be able to swim, to be anxious about posterity. p. 125) or for refusing to take part in the ghostly supper (p. 165). He is afraid of death, but hardly out of water he begins his puns again:

*Hermit*: Poor man, he is almost drowned.

*Jacomo*: No, not yet, I have only drunk something too much of a scurvy unpleasant liquor.  
(p. 135.)

In danger his tactics are «prudently to withdraw; there is as much to be ascribed to conduct as to courage» (p. 107), but being forced to fight he



does his best and afterwards assumes a ridiculous air of boldness and valour. He is rather clever in certain moments, f. i. he counterfeits death (already in the *Commedia dell'arte*) in order to get away from his master (p. 173) and frightens the shepherds away by his unlooked-for apparition in armour (p. 171). So Mesnard<sup>1)</sup> certainly does Shadwell no justice in his statement: «Sa pièce manque toujours le comique».

As to fame and reputation he has no pretensions at all: «A man had better be a living son of a whore than a dead hero» (p. 155). But he is not without conceit as to his valuable person and describes himself when «popping the question» to Leonora (p. 100) as «a man of goodly presence, something inclining to be fat . . . , with a mouth of cheerful overture, his nose which is the only fault is somewhat short». Very likely Shadwell would have some difficulty in accounting for Jacomo's knowledge of ancient history (references to Tarquin and Alexander: pp. 160, 168); just as we cannot explain Catalinon's notions of Jason and Typhis, but it must be ascribed to his own merit that he painted Jack as a Puritan hypocrite who, while he cannot do enough in the way of preaching morality, still on the first occasion shows his own passions in such a cowardly manner: Leonora swoons at the sorry news of Don John's faithlessness, Jacomo at once resolves to «refresh her», because «I dare sin in private» (p. 99). This trait of character certainly has some truth in it, though the form in which it reveals itself must disgust us and leads us to the suspicion that the writer simply profited by the opportunity to throw in one of his gross «attractions».

As Shadwell did not find it in Rosimond we must

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<sup>1)</sup> l. c. p. 65.



give him credit for the not unclever way in which he combines the plots of *Leonora and Maria*. The two unfortunate creatures correspond to a certain degree with Tirso's Isabella and Anna, but in the Spanish play and in most of its imitations their fates are not interwoven with each other, but rather form two distinct links of a loose chain of events. Nor do we find their interesting contrast before Shadwell who expressed it in the *dramatis personae* already:

Leonora, abused by Don John, yet follows  
him for love.

Maria, abused by Don John and follows  
him for revenge.

It is not without interest that Mozart's opera has the same implication of plots. — Although each of the characters is somewhat exaggerated in the expression, the one of love, the other of hatred, they are cleverly drawn out. Leonora has something in common with Molière's Elvire; she really loves Don John, therefore she cannot believe him to be false, and even when convinced beyond all doubt, she will not give him up, but follows his vessel: «What chains are these that hold me? Oh that I could break them! And yet I would not if I could» (p. 135). And although she knows him to be unworthy of her love and ungrateful for her sacrifice, her last words to her murderer are: «Heaven pardon you! Farewell! I can no more» (p. 148). But even after death she sticks to her former character, and while most of her fellow-ghosts, chiefly Maria's, call for revenge, hers and her father's call on him to repent. Maria's fierceness for revenge is not quite new either, Amarille in *Dorimond* and de Villiers being just as blood-thirsty. Molière seems to

have laid this unwomanly rage into the manly figure of Don Alonse.

The double plot of *Clara and Flavia* has already its counterpart in Dorimond, Molière, and Rosimond, while Tirso had two distinct figures (Tisbea and Aminta). We certainly sympathize with the two girls in their love of freedom and in their protest against their cruel fate of being married to unknown and unloved men, but they go too far for our taste in Clara's song with the chorus (p. 139):

Women should change  
And have freedom to range  
Like to every other wild creature.

We cannot well imagine where they obtained their knowledge of social differences between Spain and England, but what they seem to appreciate most in English manners is the lenient consideration of adultery. Clara yields pretty soon to Don John's flatteries, Flavia first plays the naive. In their bloody thirst for revenge they show a considerable want of refinement. The best thing such silly girls could do was to go to a nunnery.

Their intended *bridegrooms* are of no particular interest; they express the highest ideas which Shadwell is able to grasp of connubial happiness, so on the wedding-morning (p. 150):

*2<sup>nd</sup> bridegroom*: The expectation of so great a blessing  
as we this day hope to enjoy, would  
let us have but little rest last night.

*1<sup>st</sup> bridegroom*: And the fruitions will afford us less  
to-night.

Tirso, a pious monk, expresses the same idea in



Anna's invitation to the nightly rendez-vous, where he should « enjoy the object of his hope and love » (II. 5).

Some of these traits of character are of no great interest by themselves or in connection with the respective persons, but become very interesting because of the light they throw upon certain sides of *public and social life* in England under the later Stuarts. Several times we see the police-force beaten and laws laughed at by young scamps who cover their brutality by a show of superficial philosophy and fashionable atheism (f. i. Jacomo p. 94: « Sir, I find your worship is no more afraid to be damned, than other fashionable gentlemen of the age »). The female sex does not show off in a particularly favourable light, to conclude from Clara's and Flavia's conversation. — If we do not see how these Spanish girls obtained that knowledge of English manners, we know well enough how Shadwell got his notions of Spanish manners, Spanish literature being a favourite study in England in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, especially Cervantes' « *Novelas ejemplares* ». Beaumont liked to represent a Spanish milieu and described it well enough.

Goldoni left away every miraculous element of the fable, as the stone-monument, and so deprived his play of the most interesting attraction, Shadwell represents the other extreme, abounding in supernatural apparitions. From a merely dramatic stand-point, that is, considering the building up of the action, Shadwell's play is superior to Rosimond's. And while he disgusts us by the general tone or colour, we must acknowledge the wittiness of his dialogue, a merit obtainable, for him at least, in comic characters only. Mesnard<sup>1)</sup> closes his verdict on the « *Libertine* » as

<sup>1)</sup> p. 65.



follows: « Si l'on reconnoît dans Shadwell des couleurs fournies par Molière, c'est qu'on y met de l'obligeance ». Ward calls it « sensational enough to satisfy the robust appetite ». The mildness of these two statements is justified by historical circumstances which we must take into consideration before passing our sentence on the play.

A few remarks about some external ingredients of the 'Libertine':

The tragedy is dedicated « to the most illustrious Prince William, Duke, Marquess and Earl of Newcastle », the arbiter elegantiarum of Charles II.'s court, himself a wit and poet à la mode, to whom Shadwell had already addressed the « Sullen Lovers » and to whose illustrious wife he had dedicated the « Humorists ». The dedicatory epistle is written in the style of servile flattery usual at the time on such occasions.

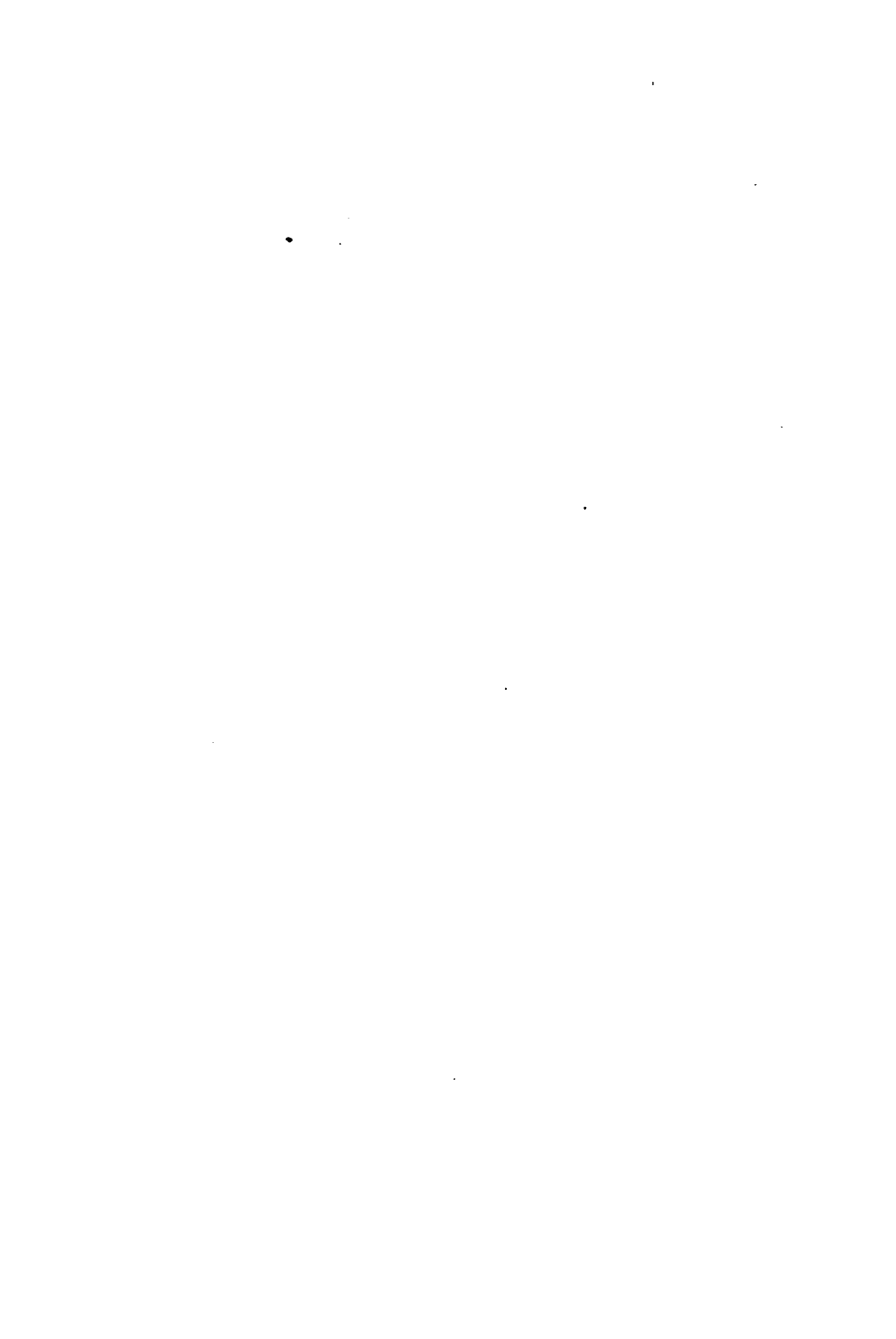
The preface contains, after those presumptuous remarks as to the sources and a partly ridiculous boast of his moral tendencies, success and rapid production, also a sharp personal controversy against « a rough hobbling rhymers », the author of the « Conquest of China » (1676!) and a shareholder in the production of « Love and Revenge » (1675). In the unfortunate victim of Shadwell's rage we recognise Elkanah Settle, his enemy and rival, against whom he vindicates the honour of the « tribe of poets », chiefly Dryden's, alluded to in Settle's dedicatory letter to the Duke of Newcastle.

Pro- and epilogue are addressed to the « bloody criticks » to whose mercy he gives over his play without hope. If they really condemned it, we cannot condemn them, though their reasons and ours are very likely not the same.

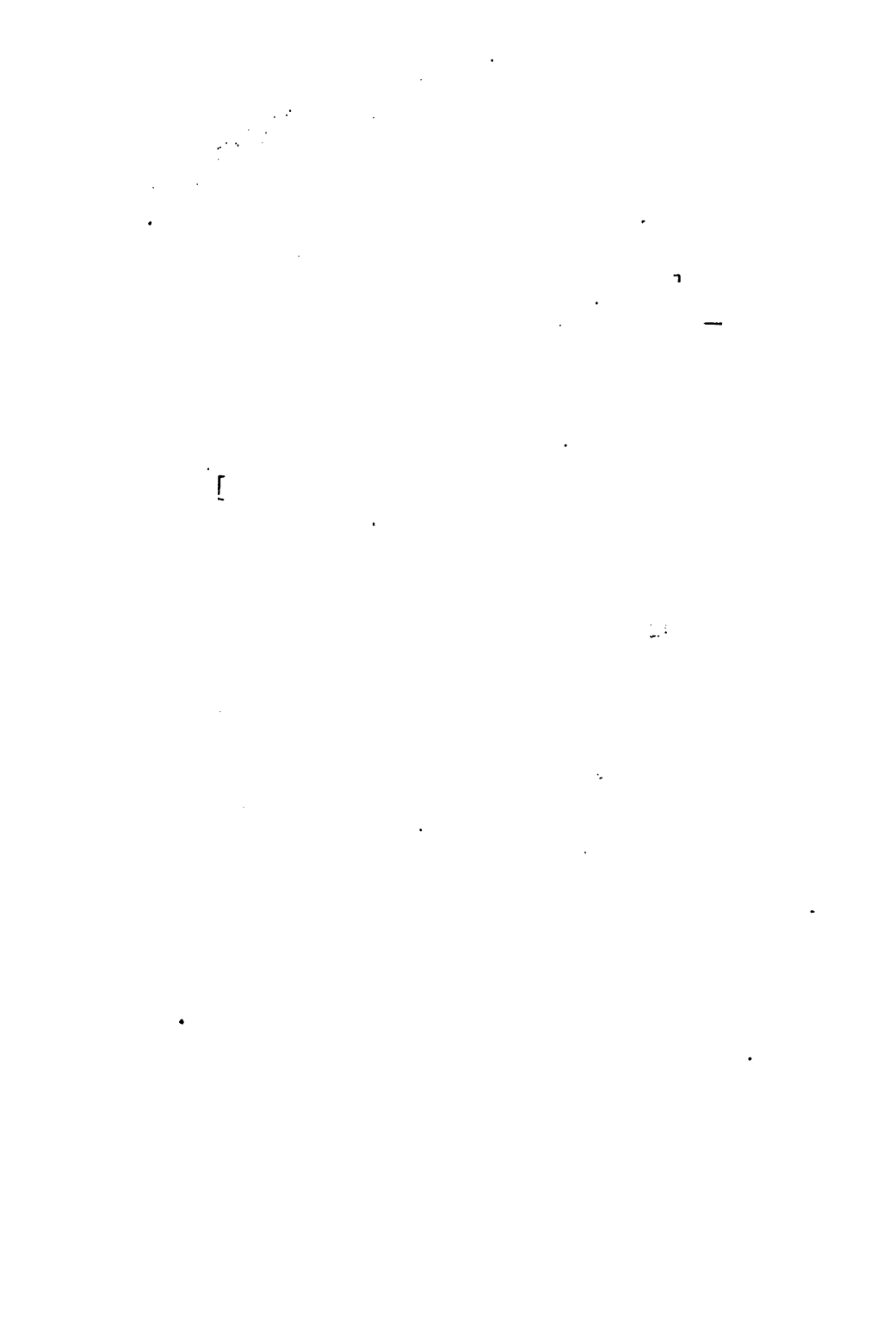
Perhaps another instance of the precipitate and negligent way in which the play was written — the manager waiting impatiently — are the mistake and the omission in the enumeration of the dramatis personae, where Don Octavio appears as Maria's brother, while her brother ~~Antonio~~ is not mentioned at all.

Shadwell's 'Libertine', and with it this treatise upon the tragedy, is the picture of a period in English literature and civilization, disgusting, it is true, to our taste, but not devoid of interest for the historian. The chief result of our investigation is the proof that our English author did not rely on Molière directly, but on Rosimond. The stage on which the French play appeared bore the ominous name of the «Théâtre du Marais»; the English tragedy was acted on a stage certainly more «marshy» than that, by — «his Majesty's servants»!









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